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1. *Fiction, American.*

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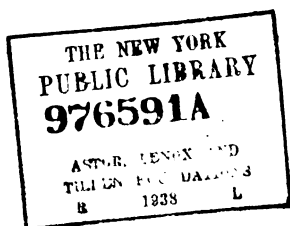
② Army ②

Boys and Girls.

By MARY G. BONESTEEL.

BALTIMORE:
JOHN MURPHY & COMPANY,
1895.

M. G. B.



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DEDICATED

TO MY FIRST AND KINDEST CRITICS,

Katherine and Hartwell,

BY

MARY G. BONESTEEL.

WQR 19 FEB 30

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❧ A CHRISTMAS BLIZZARD. ❧

A CHRISTMAS BLIZZARD.

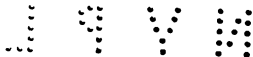
THE garrison at Fort Benton, a large Cavalry post some two hundred miles from the railroad, had determined to celebrate Christmas in a befitting manner. They had been stationed in Texas so many years, that a great many of the children of the Regiment had never known the genuine Christmas, with its proper accompaniment of roast turkey and plum pudding, at all.

Captain Haines was chosen to do the buying for the entire garrison ; so about three weeks before the all-important day, accompanied by his son Jack, a manly, well grown fellow of fifteen, the Captain started off on his long, cold three days' ambulance ride. They intended to strike the railroad at the nearest point, the little frontier town of Spencer ; from thence they would go by rail to Omaha, where even the long, long lists of wants, entrusted to Cap-

tain Haines by the ladies of the garrison, could be filled without difficulty. They took the big, yellow Dougherty wagon, as that held the most.

Of course, all Army boys and girls know what a "Dougherty wagon" is; but if those who have not an idea of it, have ever seen the stage coaches in "Buffalo Bill's Wild West," they will have a very good idea of an Army Ambulance. The Quarter-Master gave them four of his best mules, and the very best teamster he had in the post—Patsy Kerrigan by name.

As the long lists kept pouring in, the Captain soon saw that even the big Dougherty would never hold half the turkeys, oranges and candies ordered. The good natured Quarter-Master offered to send an "Escort" wagon along with the expedition. At first they all laughed at the idea, for an Escort wagon is a huge blue affair used in transporting the tents and baggage of the soldiers when they are changing station or ordered in the field. It holds thousands upon thousands of pounds. An old soldier, knowing his business, can get such a fabulous amount of luggage into one of these wagons, that the young Second Lieutenant of a Troop, if



just fresh from West Point, will open his eyes in amazement. Eventually this plan was decided upon, and one bright sunny morning the expedition set out.

Jack, bundled up in a Buffalo coat, occupied the seat of honor with the driver, and watched with the most intense interest, and just a touch of envy, Kerrigan handle his four mules as if they were no more trouble to drive than a pair of quiet horses.

"Mind you don't get lost on your way back, and eat up all our turkeys," called the Colonel, laughingly, as Kerrigan, in his most professional manner, gave the leaders a touch with his long "black snake," * which sent the Ambulance fairly dashing down the road in front of the Officers' Quarters. In two minutes it had turned the corner, and was out of sight, the big Escort wagon bumping along heavily in the rear, making a noise like thunder as it flew over the rough road.

* * * * *

It was three days before Christmas, and the shopping expedition was on its way back to the post.

* A teamster's whip.

They had stopped for the night at "Dutchy's," an old German who kept the stage station half way between the railroad town and Fort Benton.

Captain Haines had just finished his breakfast, and Jack was endeavoring to satisfy his healthy young appetite on the unsavory viands which form the staple food of ranch people—fried pork and "sody" biscuit. The teamsters were harnessing up, and hard work it was, for the mules were as frisky as colts, and seemed determined to give all the trouble possible.

Captain Haines smiled involuntarily at the grotesque appearance of his coach and four.

The "boot" of the Ambulance was packed with turkeys, frozen hard, their long necks and legs sticking out in every direction; on the outside two fat young antelopes were strapped; the antlered one Jack himself had shot, and was taking back, with the proud delight of a young hunter's first "big game" for his mother's Christmas dinner.

"If de Cabtain would oxcuse me," the old German's voice interrupted suddenly, "I dink it would be better he would go no further dis day. We will haf one plizzard pefore de night come."

The Captain gazed overhead at the unclouded blue sky; the plains were golden with the brilliant Nebraska sunshine; not enough wind was stirring to move the "tumble weeds," and he also thought to himself, "every day we stay means so many dollars in the old fellow's pockets." But all he said was:

"No, no; we must push on." Kerrigan knows every inch of the road; we'll take our chances with a blizzard. What makes you think we are likely to have one? I see no signs."

"Look," said the old fellow, pointing to the deserted-looking prairie dog mounds which dotted the ground, "de sun shines warm, dere is no wind, und yet de leetle dogs shtay in dere holes; dey know. Und last night de 'coyotes'* did not howl; dey know."

"Nonsense," said the Captain, impatiently; "a blizzard on such a perfect day as this. Kerrigan," he called, "do you think there is any chance of our being caught in a blizzard? Dutchy, here, thinks it would be safer to stay over here. I cannot see a sign of a blizzard, still I do not want to take any chances."

* The pronunciation on the plains is cy-ote.

"I don't see any signs, sir," Kerrigan answered, respectfully, "and the mules are feeling so fresh, sir, we ought to make Donahue's Ranch by dark."

"Very good; let us get off as soon as possible," answers the Captain, and soon they are flying merrily over the hard prairie road, the old "Cheyenne trail," it is called, for it was used by these Indians on their semi-annual trading visits, before they were sent into Indian Territory.

At noon they halted for an hour's rest, to feed and water the mules, and snatch a hasty lunch for themselves. In the Escort wagon is an ample supply of fuel, forage and water, and a small sheet iron cook stove used in the field, and soon the welcome odor of boiling coffee fills the air.

An icy wind has suddenly come up, and somehow the sky does not look quite as blue as it did a few hours before. The sun shines as if through a clouded glass, and away off on the dim horizon Kerrigan sees a fine dark line, so fine as to be almost imperceptible, which causes him to mutter uneasily: "P'raps that Dutchman was right, an' his talk about prairie dogs and coyotes warn't all foolishness, for that 'ere dark line means a blizzard." However, he keeps

his suspicions to himself, but when they are once more on the road Jack finds his usually talkative companion very silent; and he urges on his mules with voice and whip, until the boy says half remonstratingly :

“Why, Kerry, one would think you were running a race.”

“I am,” replied the man briefly; then, as if fearing his answer might arouse the boy’s suspicions, he added quickly: “I’m bound we’ll make Donahue’s by five o’clock.”

The sun had disappeared, hidden by a heavy gray pall which had come up suddenly from nowhere and put out the sun’s light much as we snuff out a candle. The wind fairly moaned—making a sound like a big pack of hungry gray wolves; suddenly a fine hard snow began to fall. As the wind blew it against their faces, it felt like a shower of fine, sharp pebbles, so hard did it sting.

With a sudden, vigorous pull, which threw the leaders fairly on their haunches, Kerrigan stopped the Ambulance. Throwing the reins to Jack, he pulled out a long, heavy coil of rope from beneath his seat and ran back to the Escort wagon, which

had halted only a few feet away. They made one end of the rope fast to the wagon pole, and then tied the other end securely to the boot of the Ambulance.

"We're in fur it, Jack," he remarked, coolly, as he gathered up the reins. "The biggest blizzard of the year, and we don't want to lose each other."

"Lose each other!" echoed Jack, incredulously; "do you mean to say these wagons couldn't keep each other in sight during a blizzard?"

"Well, you're jest from Texas, young man, so p'raps that will excuse such 'tenderfoot' questions. Why, ain't you ever heer'd how young Leftenant Davis was frozen to death at Fort Benton itself?"

"No; how was it?" cried Jack, eagerly.

"Well, 'twas this way: a blizzard come up sudden a little after retreat—a fearful storm it was, too; the mercury froze in the thermometers that night. The Leftenant was young, just from the P'int—an' awful military; he was Officer of the Day; so when it come time to inspect the Guard, out he goes, white gloves and all, *but without any lantern*. They found him the next morning not ten feet from his own quarters; he'd just wandered 'round and 'round

the Parade all night. They sent the poor boy home to his mother in New York, and they had a grand funeral. Every man in the post chipped in, and we telegraphed for flowers. His mother wrote a beautiful letter to the Colonel, asking him to thank the men for their gift."



Kerrigan's voice had grown a little husky in the telling of the sad story, and as Jack blinked his eyes, two big tears rolled down his cheeks, only to be frozen hard.

Just then Captain Haines called out, sleepily :

"Jack, is it *snowing*? I must have dropped asleep. What does this sudden change mean, Kerrigan?"

"A blizzard, I'm afraid, Captain," returned the man; "but where it came from beats me; there warn't a sign of it when we started this morning."

Throwing open the Ambulance door, the Captain quickly surveyed their surroundings; not a trace of a habitation was to be seen. Already the snow was falling so thickly that the outline of the Escort wagon was dim.

"Come inside, Jack," he called, and his voice sounded faint and far away through the noise of the storm. Then, as the Ambulance halted, the Captain gave his orders to the men.

The extra man on the Escort wagon was to come inside the Ambulance; then every half hour the two men inside the Ambulance, including, of course, the Captain, were to relieve the drivers. They were to keep going at any rate, sticking to the road as long as possible. The mules would refuse to go on, once they were allowed to stop, and this meant certain death. Their best chance lay in coming across some isolated ranch, and the drivers were cautioned to keep up a close lookout for lights.

Jack pleaded to be allowed to take his turn at the driving, but his father refused, for the boy had not long recovered from a bad attack of fever.

II.

The small, two-roomed sod house that stood in the centre of Hans Breitman's "claim" was nearly buried in the deep snow drifts that the wind had deposited on three sides of it; but the little grass plat in front of the house was as free from snow as if it had been newly swept. Blizzards play queer freaks with the elements. From the two small, many-paned windows a bright light streamed out, unhindered by shade or curtain. Around the big open fire-place were gathered a group of four. A sweet, flaxen-haired girl of about sixteen sat in a low chair near the tempting blaze, while at her feet knelt two little ones—a boy and girl of about eight and ten—busily engaged in arranging two pairs of little wooden shoes.

"Gretchen," the little boy was saying, "Dost think the good St. Nicholas will ever find our small house in this fearful storm? The prairies are so wide and the house is so small. Perhaps, too, his beautiful white horse might stumble and be buried in a big white snow-drift."

The little girl's lips quivered at this dreadful idea; then she answered stoutly :

"Even so, Johann; the Christ-Child will surely come; the dear Christ-Child comes flying straight from Heaven, you know. The snow and the wind will not stop Him," she said, reverently.

"He will have to bring our tree Himself," replied the boy, "for Frieda has been unable to find one."

A boy of fourteen, who had been sitting quietly in the shadow with his face buried in his hands, roused himself at the last speech of his little brother and called impatiently:

"Frieda! Frieda! how canst thou bear to hear the innocent prattle of the little ones, when thou dost well know there is not food for the morrow? Perhaps thou art thinking that the good St. Nicholas will bring thee a bag of flour, and the Christ-Child a tree for the little ones?" He laughed sharply and bitterly as he spoke.

The girl laid her fingers gently on his lips, saying:

"Hush, hush, my Wilhelm; would thou make the dear Mother in Heaven sad? I know that if we pray, the dear Christ-Child will send us help."

They spoke in German for they had not long left the dear Fatherland and knew very little English.

When the two little ones were tucked away for the night, the two elder children discussed their situation, which was grave enough.

A week ago their father had started to the nearest town, some forty miles away, to lay in his winter supplies, and nothing had been heard from him ; then the blizzard had begun, and they had been unable to leave the house to even care for the stock.

Christmas eve had come, and Frieda had used the very last scrap of flour for their supper. What were they to do, alone, on the desolate prairie.

Absorbed in their sad thoughts the two children sat in silence in front of the glowing fire—fortunately there was plenty of fuel.

Suddenly a sound seemed to strike the girl's ear, but so faint was it, that she was about to put it down to the wailing of the wind, when again it was repeated, this time so loud that Wilhelm, too, heard it.

"Hark !" he cried, "some one is perishing in the storm. Quick ! quick ! Frieda we must go to their help."

Hastily bundling up and taking the big lantern, they started out ; Wilhelm taking the precaution to fasten his sister to him with a short stout rope, for so

blinding was the stinging icy snow, so intense the blackness of the night, they could not see ten paces ahead. They were risking their lives and well they knew it, but it was to save human life. For one instant Frieda hesitated, the thought of the little ones drew her back, when again that long wail for help was heard.

With all the strength of his young lungs, Wilhelm shouted back : "Have courage ! We are coming !"

"Merciful God, I thank thee !" exclaimed Captain Haines, as the boy's cheery shout caught his listening ear. "Jack ! Jack ! we are saved !" he cried, anxiously shaking the boy, who was so exhausted and benumbed by the intense cold that another ten minutes of exposure would have been fatal.

"Mother of Mercy, there's a light, Captain !" exclaimed poor Kerrigan, who was helping support poor Jack.

"Yes, yes, I see it," returned the Captain. "Now, men, an effort and we are safe. Never mind the mules, they will follow us all right."

"Come, men, *forward !*" the Captain's voice rang out, sharp and imperative, a last instinct of soldierly obedience prompting these exhausted, frozen men to

obey their superior officer's command. Mechanically, they struggled on.

Frieda, like a beautiful golden-haired angel, stood holding up the lantern.

With a cry of pity Wilhelm threw his strong young arms around poor Jack, and in another five minutes, the storm-beaten party had thrown themselves in front of the blazing logs of the big fireplace.

With tears in her sweet blue eyes, Frieda commenced to explain that there was nothing, absolutely nothing to eat in the house; then, with a gesture towards the little empty shoes, she told of the implicit faith of the little ones, who had left their shoes for St. Nicholas to fill, believing that they would awaken to find the Christmas tree lighted, glittering with gay ornaments, and hung with nuts and sweet cakes, such as the Christ-Child always left for good children in the dear Fatherland.

Jack was a fair German scholar, and as he rapidly translated Frieda's pathetic story, Captain Haines' face lighted up with pleasure.

"Tell her we are not hungry, Jack; that we have had our supper to-night; but we would like to go to sleep as soon as possible."

Jack smiled happily; he knew his father had some pleasant plan on foot, and now that he was warm, it seemed to him there was nothing more to ask for. Yawning sleepily, Jack informed Frieda that there was nothing they wanted so much as sleep.

As her sweet face vanished, and her "Good night, and the good God guard thee," fell from her still tremulous lips, Captain Haines chuckled.

"I fancy a Yankee Santa Claus will do quite as well as the German one, even if he does wear a Cavalry uniform."

Kerrigan and Wilhelm came in to report that the mules of both wagon and Ambulance had followed to the house, and the animals had been put up in safety in the empty stock sheds.

* * * * *

It was fully six o'clock Christmas morning when Frieda opened her eyes. It was quite dark outside, and not a sound came from the front room, where their guests had spent the night.

Reverently making the sign of the cross, the girl murmured a soft Christmas greeting to the two little ones who slept with her in the big old fashioned four-

poster, their sole relic of the dear Fatherland. She arose softly and began to dress.

First Johann, then Gretchen opened their eyes, and then, remembering the day, were all excitement to run in and see the tree the Christ-Child had brought. Never for one moment had their childish faith doubted.

"Listen, my dear ones," began Frieda, sadly; "the Christ-Child *did* bring us a gift in the storm last night, but not a tree."

"Oh! but Frieda, *there is* the tree, and such a beautiful one," exclaimed little Gretchen, who had slightly opened the front door. "And oh! Johann, our shoes! See! they are filled with beautiful things!"

"Children, children, you are dreaming," cried Frieda, for she felt as if she could not bear their sad disappointment.

But with cries of joy they broke from her and rushed into the front room, in the centre of which stood a tall pine tree, the largest they had ever seen. On the very top hung a large, exquisite figure of a golden winged wax angel.

"The Christ-Child!" cried Johann and Gretchen, reverently.

Such a Christmas ! Captain Haines declared that if it had not been for the thought of those poor turkeyless people at the garrison, he couldn't have enjoyed himself more.

Jack said it was as good as a Christmas gift every time he looked at Frieda's happy face and smiling eyes.

Such a dinner as they had, with raw oysters on the half shell for the first course—there was a barrel of them in the wagon—and the Colonel's turkey was chosen, as it was the biggest and fattest of them all. When the oranges made their appearance at dessert, even Frieda and dignified Wilhelm clapped their hands in delight. True, they had *seen* oranges in the Fatherland, but as for *eating* them, it was an undreamed of luxury ; only the Burgomaster could afford that in our village, Frieda explained to Jack.

* * * * *

The storm kept up unabated for three whole days, and by the end of that time serious inroads were made upon their stock of provisions. Not a turkey was left, so they commenced on the antelope. Jack still hoped to save his for his mother.

The fourth day broke clear and sunshiny, but Captain Haines declared he could not abandon those

four children, and they had not enough provisions to leave them. They waited all that day to see if the father would turn up; but as he did not, the next morning Captain Haines told Frieda to wrap them up well, for he meant to take them with him to the Fort. He wrote a note, explaining matters to the absent father. Then once again they started on their return trip.

* * * * *

Just as the big "Retreat" gun gave its farewell bang, and the storm flag came fluttering down from the tall staff, to be safely folded away for the night, the Ambulance drove quickly around the corner of the Adjutant's office, with the big Escort wagon bounding along in the rear, nearly as empty as when it started out, for it had nothing in it but the *Christmas tree*.

Jack's Antelope hung limp and lonely—"all its lovely companions were eaten and gone"—on the boot of the ambulance. Every one crowded around them, all talking and laughing at once. All save Mrs. Haines, who had clasped her dear ones in her arms in fervent thanksgiving.

"Eaten up all our turkeys, I suppose," cried the Colonel's jovial voice.

"Yes, every one," said Captain Haines, calmly. A chorus of groans from the grown-up people.

"Saved all the toys and candy, I suppose."

"Yes, indeed ; and the biggest and prettiest tree you've ever seen."

A wild shout of delight followed from every youngster in the post ; what did they care for turkey and oysters.

And so they celebrated Christmas at Fort Benton after all ; a little late, perhaps, but then as the Mammas carefully explained to the little ones, even Reindeer found it quite impossible to face a Nebraska blizzard ; but that Santa Claus had come as soon as possible, even beating the mail stage, and you could not expect more than that, from the dear old fellow. As for the four Breitmans, when their father arrived safe and sound two days later, they spent the very happiest week in all their lives.

The friendship formed during the days of storm and trouble, was never suffered to decline. Captain and Mrs. Haines resolved to take upon themselves the education of Frieda and Wilhelm, as an act of grateful thanksgiving to the Merciful God who had guided the lost party, when perishing, to the home of these

brave young people, who had been the instruments of Divine Mercy. Wilhelm accompanied Jack back to Notre Dame, while Frieda went to the Madames of the Sacred Heart in Omaha, the dear old grandmother coming across the ocean, to care for the little ones. Neither Wilhelm nor Frieda ever forget their daily thanksgiving to the Christ-Child for the gift He brought them from out of the storm—the gift of warm, true friends.

❧ "TRAMP," OF COMPANY G. ❧

"TRAMP," OF COMPANY G.

TOMMY, the youngest and best field musician not only in G Company, but in the whole Post, was giving his beloved instrument a final polish before sounding the call for dress parade.

The slight, boyish figure looked very smart, indeed, in the well-fitted, trim dress coat with its trimmings of Infantry white. Tommy was well set up in every particular ; carried himself like a West Point Cadet. Indeed, little Mr. Howe, the last subaltern from the Point, was Tommy's envy and despair ; the dapper young officer with his twenty-two inch waist and his intensely military air and carriage, had been the young bugler's secret model ever since his advent at Fort Harvey.

In front of the different company barracks the men were waiting for the call to sound before falling in. Down at the Adjutant's office the Sergeant-Major and the gorgeous young Adjutant stood, while

the Colonel, pacing up and down his front porch, wondered if the call wasn't a bit late—all were waiting for Tommy, who, disregarding his bran new dress coat and his immaculate white gloves—even his shining bugle for the moment forgotten, was down on his knees in the small patch of buffalo grass in the rear of the company barracks, bending with evident distress over a poor, forlorn, half-starved dog, whose right front paw was bleeding profusely from a bad cut—his important duty for the time forgotten. The dog was, or rather had been, a beautiful black shepherd or collie, but a long course of ill treatment and neglect had dulled his shining coat; his paw was badly hurt and Tommy was not sure but the leg above it was broken. Tears came into the boy's merry blue eyes, for he was passionately fond of dumb animals, and much resembled sweet St. Francis d'Assisi in his care and devotion to the birds and beasts, although he himself would never have understood the comparison.

"Good dog, good old fellow," Tommy was saying, trying to induce the poor animal to let him examine the wounded paw, when suddenly a voice called from the barracks porch :

"Kid! what on earth is the matter with you? What is keeping you? everybody's waiting for Assembly to blow; the Colonel has just started his



orderly over to the Guard House to find out the cause of the delay. Hurry, now, or you will find yourself in a scrape."

"Oh, Sergeant, see this poor dog! he's dying, I believe, and he seems to kind of know me; some one's treated him awful cruel. I forgot all about Parade."

By this time the Sergeant had reached the boy, and picking up the bugle and white gloves he said, authoritatively: "Duty first, Tommy; here, cut in the back way; if you run you'll make it before the 'K. O.'s' (commanding officer's) orderly; it's old Schartz, and he can't hurry to save his life. I'll give the dog a blanket to lie on—"

But Tommy was off before his friend had finished speaking.

"Beastly shame to use a fine animal in this way," muttered Sergeant Carroll. "I'd like to punch the head of the man that hurt you, you poor old fellow." Then running lightly into the squad-room he returned with an old chintz comfortable, and quickly and deftly, with real tenderness, moved the dog on to the soft couch; then, filling the tin pan, that did service for the numerous company dogs' drinking pan, he moved it so the thirsty dog could lap the cool water, without having to use the wounded paw.

The Sergeant had done all this very quickly, but even as he finished, the last flourish of the buglers, sounding Assembly, ceased.

"The very first time since I've been in the service that I've been late to a roll call; but it's in a good cause, and I don't regret it," thought the young fellow, as he flew to his position in the ranks, reaching there so breathless, and with his heart thumping so loudly, it seemed as if the sound could be heard all over the Parade. No one apparently noticed that he was late, save the First Sergeant, who smiled in a slightly malignant fashion, but of course said nothing.

"That fellow hates me," thought Carroll. "I wonder why? I've certainly never done him any injury. He's a handsome fellow, and a smart looking soldier; yet there's something about his face, that makes me distrust him. His eyes are too close together for an honest man. You don't like *me*, Sergeant Carey, and this little aversion is mutual; never mind, I'll try and keep out of your way and so keep out of a scrape, most likely."

Just then the line for Parade was formed and Sergeant Carroll had no more time for thinking of any kind. For Captain Barron, his Company com-

mander, was very severe on any man making a mistake at Parade; as it was, Carroll did not in the least expect that his "late" at Company formation had remained unnoticed, indeed he felt quite sure that he was in for a bad quarter of an hour after Parade was dismissed, for even if it were possible that Captain Barron had not noticed his dereliction from duty, Sergeant Carey would be sure and report him.

For some time there had been a decided feeling of enmity between the First Sergeant of Company G, William Carey, and the ranking duty Sergeant, Frank Carroll; there had been no open expression of ill feeling between the two, and perhaps this very smothering of it, made it all the more intense. Young Carroll was not aware how he had aroused the ill-will of his First Sergeant; he was not conscious of having done anything to offend him; true, he did not like, nor trust him, but he had never shown these feelings, he was too good a soldier to show open disrespect to his superior.

The men in the Company could have told Carroll the reason of Carey's dislike, if they had so chosen, but having had several experiences, the reverse of

pleasant, of their First Sergeant's violent temper, they judged it more discreet to keep silence on the subject.

Carroll's deadly offenses were three in number. First, he was a gentleman, and the son of one; secondly, he had enlisted in the army for the purpose of obtaining a commission, and by his modesty, his studious and soldierly qualities, had won the respect and liking of every officer in the regiment; last, but by no means least, he was a sworn enemy of *bullying* in every form.

As this last form of amusement had been a favorite pastime of Sergeant Carey's, who had taken advantage of his great physical strength as well as his authoritative position to annoy, in many ways some of the younger and weaker men in his Company, Carroll's disapproval of his favorite amusement greatly incensed him. He had tried these tactics on young Carroll during the very first week of his enlistment, but had not only signally failed, but received a well merited punishment. It had been a memorable scene, witnessed and hugely enjoyed by several of Carey's recent victims, and for many years the tale was handed down in G Com-

pany how "a cheeky kid of a 'cruity' had done up a First Sergeant." It happened in this way :

Carroll was seated at the big reading table in the centre of the squad-room answering his mother's latest letter—a letter filled with the tender love and anxiety of a mother for an only son far away from her, and occupying a trying position. It lay spread open before Carroll, the heavy cream paper with daintily engraved monogram and address proclaiming its aristocratic origin. Carroll, absorbed in the efforts of composition, doing his best to write his beloved mother only the bright side of soldiering, did not notice the approach of Carey until the latter, with a coarse laugh, seized the open letter and exclaimed loudly :

"Here's young Carroll been in the Company a whole week, and never confided to us as he'd a sweetheart ; she must be a swell, an' a heavy swell, too, judgin' from the style she puts on. There's no *secrets* allowed in G Company, young man, so we'll just see what sweet things the young lady's a tellin' you." With this, the man coolly proceeded to read, "My own darling—"

Hardly had the last word left his mouth, when Carroll, white with wrath, and with every nerve in his body throbbing with his violent efforts at self-control, faced him, saying quietly, though a bit unsteadily :

"That letter is from my *mother*, Sergeant Carey, and I'll thank you to hand it back to me."

"This letter is from my mother," mimicked the Sergeant. "Go tell that to the marines; mothers don't commence their letters 'My own darling.' Don't try to *lie* out of it, young man."

"No man shall use that word to me more than once, Sergeant Carey," replied Carroll, in a dangerously quiet voice, that meant mischief, if only the big bully had had sense enough to realize it.

"Ho, ho! listen to the little cock-crow! I'll call you what I like; do you hear? And I'll read your silly letters, too; do you hear that? I say you're a li—"

The vile word was never ended, for at that instant Carroll's strong right fist landed cleverly on the brutal man's mouth, and he dropped like a log to the floor, stunned for a moment, and dropping the letter, the cause of all the trouble, as he fell.

Carroll calmly picked it up, and went on with his writing as if nothing had occurred, while the men who had witnessed the insult and its justly merited punishment, slunk quietly away, having no desire to face their Sergeant's wrath when he recovered. Carroll wondered himself a little nervously what the Sergeant would do, for of course he was well aware that he had outraged all military discipline. Still, when he thought of the provocation he had received, his fists clinched involuntarily. No man could have stood being called a liar.

* * * * *

The Sergeant lay still for a moment; then, with a slight laugh, arose, approached Frank and said: "Well, young 'un, you're a hard hitter; but I don't bear malice. Here, shake and be friends. I am sorry I riled you so."

"With all my heart, Sergeant," replied Frank, heartily. "I don't mind saying I was a bit hasty, too; but I've a beastly quick temper when I am roused."

Carroll felt much relieved at this outcome of the affair; but if he had seen the look of vindictive hate which the beaten bully cast on him as he left the

squad-room, and had heard him mutter savagely, "I'll pay you back, you young devil, if it takes me my whole life," perhaps he would not have been so easily satisfied that all was well. But as Sergeant Carey's manner changed for the better, and as time went on he even tried to ingratiate himself with Carroll in many little ways, it was no wonder the boy could not imagine the older man was harboring a feeling of bitter hate against him, with a determined idea of revenge.

Carroll, with his frank, open nature, could not have even understood the feelings of Carey. He had knocked his enemy down, beaten him fairly and squarely. Why should a man want revenge because he had been knocked down in an open and square fight?

"They had shaken hands and agreed to be friends again." So Carroll had said stoutly again and again when his faithful ally, Musician Tommy, would have endeavored to warn him against Carey.

Though Carroll said this, yet in his heart he felt an instinctive dislike and distrust for his First Sergeant.

* * * * *

The moment Parade was over and the Company had broken ranks, Tommy threw off his best clothes and hurried out to find his canine tramp friend. As he was busily engaged examining the patient animal's paw, Carroll joined him.

"I am afraid, Tommy, that this is a surgical case beyond our skill ; the leg is broken, besides being so badly cut," he said.

"Don't you think you could set the leg, Sergeant?" replied Tommy, coaxingly ; "you're smart enough for most anything you put your hand to."

"Get out with you and your Irish blarney, Tommy Murphy. The best I can do for the poor brute is to ease his pain with a bullet, unless—I say, Tommy, perhaps young Dr. Barry would help us. He may be a *little* chap," and Carroll unconsciously straightened up his six feet of muscular young bone and sinew, "but his heart is big enough ; he's as kind and gentle with a private soldier as he is with the "Old man" * himself ; perhaps he will help this poor old fellow out of a bad scrape. If you go now, Tommy, you'll be likely to find him at his quarters."

* Military slang for the commanding officer.

"I said you'd find a way to help, Sergeant; whether with your wits or not, that makes no difference," said Tommy, gratefully, as he started off on his errand.

"Poor old dog," mused Carroll, patting the creature's head; "life cannot have been so pleasant to you, that you would want it prolonged, so it is more for Tommy's sake than your own that I hope the doctor can cure you."

The dog seemed to appreciate Carroll's sympathy, for he wagged his tail feebly and attempted to lick his benefactor's hand.

"You've been a genuine aristocrat, haven't you, old fellow? but you seem to have struck hard times lately. Keep up your courage; a few moments now will settle your fate. Dr. Barry will decide whether you are to have another chance for life."

The dog whined and moaned uneasily, as if he really understood what the young fellow was saying.

"What! don't want to die—is that it?" Strange, thought Carroll; human or brute, we are all the same; while there's any chance left, we cling to life.

"Ah! Sergeant, where is my patient?" exclaimed the doctor's voice as he came through the barracks. "I've sent Murphy to the hospital for some splints

and bandages; there he comes now; why how he must have run. What do you mean, Murphy, tearing around the post in this violent fashion, and all for a dog, too?" says the young doctor, severely; but there is a kindly twinkle in his eye as he looks at poor Tommy's scarlet and breathless countenance.

"Please, doctor, it's the way I usually walk," answered Tommy, meekly enough.

As this was quite true, there was nothing more to be said. In the meantime Carroll had quietly disappeared, but presently returned with a bowl of clean warm water.

"How strong shall I make the solution, doctor?" he asked.

"What do you know about antiseptic surgery, young man? Ah! I beg your pardon. It's young Carroll, isn't it? This half light is very trying for near-sighted people."

Carroll saluted and stood stiffly at attention. But the good-natured little doctor smiled, and remarked pleasantly, as he returned the salute:

"Very good, Sergeant. Now that we've attended to these little official amenities, perhaps you will be good enough to assist me in this operation."

As the doctor dressed with careful fingers the poor wounded paw, he talked away. "You know, Sergeant, of course I believe in military discipline; but I must say it often strikes me as—umph!—well, to say the least, unnecessary."

This was rank heresy, and Carroll frowned at Tommy and shook his head. After all, a doctor was only a doctor, and no soldier, and it would not do for the "kid" to imbibe any such heretical notions.

"Now for the broken leg!" exclaimed Dr. Barry. "Hold the splints for me, Sergeant. There now, old dog. I'll wager a good deal you are feeling more comfortable now than you have in many a day," said the doctor, as he gave the finishing touches to the splinted and neatly-bandaged leg. "Keep him on a low diet, Murphy, till the wound heals, and dress it every day as you saw me do now. I'll leave this solution for you to use. What's the poor beast's name? Where did you find him?"

"He just came to the Company, sir," returned Murphy. "He's only a tramp dog."

"A tramp? Well, that's a good name for him, too. Eh, Tramp, good old dog?"

The dog seemed to recognize that he had been rechristened, for he pricked up his ears at the sound of his new name and thumped his tail.

Just as Dr. Barry was hurrying to escape Tommy's loud and fervent protestations of gratitude, Sergeant Carey called from the door of the barrack-room :

"Carroll, Captain Barron wishes you to report to him at once at his quarters, and state why you were late at Parade this evening."

"The mean brute!" muttered Tommy, referring of course to his First Sergeant. "He's reported you, Carroll; and if you get into a scrape, it's all my fault, and so I'll tell the Captain."

"Hush, Tommy! you foolish, hot little champion. I *was* late, and the Sergeant has a perfect right to report me. Very good, Sergeant," Carroll called out. "I'll report to the Captain at once."

II.

Since the time Frank Carroll had been old enough to handle a toy wooden gun, he had determined to be a soldier. Unlike most small boys, his ambition had only grown the stronger with age. So when his father, a busy physician in the growing New England

town of Sussex, had obtained from the Congressman of that district the appointment to West Point for Frank, as "alternate" to young Tom Bailey, rather a dull boy—if his father did happen to be the richest man in the town—Mrs. Carroll and the girls, Frank's two pretty sisters, Mary and Alice, felt that Frank's future was assured. Not that they actually wished poor Tom Bailey to fail; oh! no; but then everybody knew Tom to be awfully stupid, and really there wasn't a ghost of a show for his getting through West Point.

But Tom astonished not only the Carroll family, but his own, by getting through his examinations in some sort of a fashion. He "boned" * away night and day, and though at the tail end of his class, Frank saw, after waiting two years for Tom to fail, that some other plan would have to be followed. True, he had not wasted these two years; he had been a day student at the big Jesuit College near, and after graduating with honors in June, had gone into his father's office and read medicine in a desultory sort of a way, with, however, such a decided hankering after the sword, that the surgeon's knife

* West Point slang for hard studying.

seemed a very poor substitute. Picking up a newspaper one day, he chanced to see a short account of how an enlisted man in the United States Army could get a commission. As an example, the recent career of a gallant young Sergeant of Cavalry was spoken of. The article went on to tell of the bravery shown by Sergeant William Smith in a recent Indian campaign, praised his athletic achievements, saying that his fine athletic record had evidently not interfered with the young man's studies, as he had made the remarkable percentage of 98 $\frac{1}{2}$.

Frank gave a low whistle, expressive of intense amazement, and exclaimed excitedly: "By Jove! I believe it means Billy Smith. I know he's in that very Cavalry regiment, but I had no idea it was so easy to get a commission that way. I'll write Billy to-day."

The upshot of the whole matter was, Frank determined to enlist. His father approved, but his mother wept, and the girls pouted—for their visions of West Point hops, cadet beaux and buttons, vanished; however, when they found neither tears nor frowns altered Frank's settled purpose, they gave way to the inevitable, and Mrs. Carroll wrote to a

cousin, who was Colonel of the 31st Infantry, stationed at Fort Harvey, asking him to take charge of her son. Colonel Hamilton replied at once, telling them to send the boy along, and he would answer for it, that whether or not the boy got his commission, his two years in the service would do him no harm.

So the first week in January had found young Carroll a favored guest at Colonel Hamilton's, where his boy and girl cousins were disposed to make much of him, knowing that once he had enlisted, they would see very little of him, so strict is the line drawn between the soldier and the officer. A royal good time they all had, too. There were sleigh rides and skating parties, candy pulls, parlor theatricals, and a big hop to end up the week's festivities.

The last Sunday morning, when Frank walked by the side of pretty Alice Barron to High Mass, he wondered if it had been a wise thing for him to have joined in these social pleasures, when tomorrow would see him cut off entirely from all such enjoyments. He sighed as he thought of it, and Alice asked quickly :

"What is the matter, Mr. Carroll? That was such a doleful sigh."

"I was only thinking that next Sunday Private Carroll, of G Company, would not be permitted to take his Captain's daughter to church."

But Alice only laughed at him. "One would think two years an eternity to hear you talk, Mr. Carroll. You will have your commission almost before you know it. Then, too, you will be able to see your friends once in awhile, for Father Harold intends asking you to be our organist. Your fame at St. Ignatius has preceded you, you see. I often think how much we Catholics have to be thankful for at this frontier post, with our dear little chapel and a Catholic chaplain, when there are not over four in the whole Army."

"Father Harold has been awfully kind," answered Frank, gratefully. "You know I am going to him to recite in mathematics twice a week. Then Lieutenant Brown has offered to take me one evening in the week for my other subjects."

They had reached the chapel door by this time, and Alice had just time to whisper shyly, "I will pray for your success every day, Mr. Carroll," before they entered the church.

III.

When poor old Tramp made his appearance that hot July evening, Carroll had been in the service a year and a half. Truly, as pretty Alice Barron had said, the months had fairly flown away. He had really not had time to mope or be homesick. And those blessed Saturdays and Sundays, when they had choir practice, had made very delightful breaks in his monotonous life, and had made him feel as though he were not quite an outcast.

During all this time Carroll had done splendidly, had been promoted in due order to Corporal, and only recently had received his Sergeant's chevrons. He was popular, and deservedly so, with both officers and men, with the single exception of his First Sergeant, Carey. He had been before the Examining Board in April and passed magnificently, and he was now studying hard for his final examination in September, Father Harold devoting three evenings a week to him.

So far everything had gone well with Carroll; but from the very day of Tramp's advent, the worst kind of luck seemed to befall him. "Tommy, your

dog is a regular Jonah," groaned Carroll, for he had been reprimanded by his Captain for his "late" at Parade; he had made a miserable score at Target Practice the next morning. A week later, one of a working party of general prisoners had escaped from the Sentry while Carroll was Sergeant of the guard, and when he had borrowed Captain Barron's horse to go in pursuit of the man, what should the perverse animal do but step in a prairie-dog hole and lame himself badly. Tramp seemed to understand that he was being accused, for he hung his tail between his legs and looked most dejected. He had been with his new friends two weeks now, and had adopted both Carroll and Tommy as his masters, with a leaning towards Carroll, which, to say the least, was ungrateful to Tommy, who had first befriended him. But Tommy was not a bit jealous; he was such an ardent admirer of Carroll himself, that he thought it only natural the dog should prefer his hero to himself.

Late one evening, as Carroll sat on the steps of the barrack porch playing his guitar and humming softly to himself "Sweet Alice, 'Tis Ever of Thee," he was startled to hear Tommy give a cautious "Hush!" then whisper excitedly, "Come here, quick!"

There was no moon, and the night was very dark; but, following Tommy's whispered directions, Carroll saw moving in the rear window of the Post Canteen the faint glimmer of a light. Now a light had no business there at that time of night, for "Taps" (eleven o'clock roll call) had blown some time ago, Tommy himself being bugler of the Guard.

"Is there anything wrong, Tommy? Who is over there at the Canteen?"

They had been walking rapidly all this time in the direction of the light, which now began to approach them.

"Stand here, and we will soon see, though I have my suspicions," whispered the boy, pulling Carroll into the dense shadow of a big cotton-wood tree.

Even as he finished speaking, two dark figures approached their hiding-place, talking as they walked. To his great surprise, Carroll recognized the voices—it was too dark to see their faces—as those of Sergeant Carey and the new Commissary Sergeant, a dapper young man who had only recently reported for duty. Carey was saying:

"It's of no use to try it now. It would not be worth while."

"Perhaps you are right. We might as well make a big thing of it," returned the other.

Just then they were interrupted by a growl from Tramp, who had followed Carroll unknown to him.

"There's that d—— dog of Carroll's. I'd like to put a bullet through him. I will, too, if ever I get a chance. That dog hates me, because he knows I hate his master. There, take that, you brute!" and the Sergeant planted a vicious kick on poor Tramp's side.

In an instant the dog sprang at him, and would have fastened his teeth in the man's arm, but that Carroll, walking out of the shadow, called sternly, "Down, Tramp! Down, sir!" Then he turned to the frightened man and remarked, coolly: "Tramp won't stand bullying, Sergeant Carey, any more than his master."

"How dare you! What do you—" began the angry man.

"You know well enough what I mean, Carey."

"I know one thing: you are a d—— impudent, young whipper-snapper. What are you doing out of barracks this time of night?"

"I might ask the same question of you, Sergeant. By the way, *what* were you doing *at this time of night* over at the Canteen?"

"I had been spending the evening with Sergeant Grant here. He was walking home with me, when we saw some one had left the window of the Canteen open. We were closing it."

Carroll listened to this voluble explanation, then remarked, indifferently: "I saw the light, and came over to investigate. As for my being out, you know as well as I that I have the Captain's permission to sit up until twelve to study. I had a bad headache and am trying the fresh air-cure."

He allowed the two men to pass him, then said, ironically: "What a curious thing that you could see an *open* window on such a *dark* night. I congratulate you both on your extraordinary eyesight."

"Curse that fellow with his d—— fine airs," muttered Carey to his friend. "Do you think he suspected anything?"

"No; of course not," returned his companion; "why should he?"

Carroll stayed only a moment to caution Tommy, who had not made his appearance on the scene, to

be quiet about this little incident ; then he made his way back to the barracks and "turned in,"* and, truth to tell, forgot all about the odd little incident of the night.

But Tramp did not ; he had not forgiven that low, cruel kick, and he showed his teeth in a silent growl whenever Sergeant Carey came near him.

IV.

The Canteen † had done a rushing business that day, and when they shut up at nine o'clock, Mr. Brown, the Canteen officer, found he had close on to a thousand dollars to put in the stout iron safe that stood in his office.

"By Jove! I hate having so much money around, but it's as safe here as anywhere. Carroll's Sergeant of the Guard to-night, so when he comes over for his recitation to-night I'll ask him to keep a good look out."

It was about two o'clock, the very darkest hour between midnight and dawn, when suddenly the garrison was awakened by the sound of several pistol

* The army word for going to bed.

† The enlisted men's lunch and billiard room.

shots. A chorus of excited yells followed, and the sound of many feet, all hurrying in the direction of the Canteen, roused the entire post. A strange sight met the eye of the Officer of the Day, who happened to be Captain Barron. The outer door of the safe had been forced open, the combination lock had been tried apparently in vain, for an attempt to blow it open with powder had been made. Prone on the floor, one nerveless hand half covering a small steel crow-bar, the other holding loosely the butt-end of a recently discharged pistol, lay Sergeant Francis Carroll, while bending over him was the Commissary Sergeant, holding a dark lantern. Sergeant Carey was talking in the high shrill voice of intense excitement:

"We caught him; he's tried to rob the safe. I always knew he wasn't square, with his fine airs and goody-goody ways. Grant and me caught him."

"For shame; don't hit a man when he's down," growled a voice or two in protest.

It was this scene Captain Barron interrupted: "My God! what does this mean? Carroll a thief? Is he hurt? Here, one of you men, run for the doctor."

But Doctor Barry was entering the door as the Captain spoke, while most of the officers of the garrison followed in his wake, although it had not been five minutes since the alarm was first given.

"Shall I put Carroll in arrest, sir?" Carey asked, a little too eagerly, for Captain Barron, after a keen look at the excited man, said :

"No,—or rather yes, of course ; but take him to the hospital."

"I have already sent for a stretcher, Captain Barron," interrupted Doctor Barry. "The man is badly hurt. He is unconscious from a blow on the head, and has a bullet through his shoulder ; but I cannot pretend to make a thorough examination in this light. It seems to me hardly necessary that two men of your size should have had to half kill the man to arrest him," growled the Doctor, suddenly facing Grant and Carey.

Carey muttered, sullenly : "He was very desperate ; swore we shouldn't take him alive. He had a pistol, sir."

"Well, you had *two* between you," returned Doctor Barry, for Grant was still holding his, and Carey's stuck out of the breast of his blouse, where he had hastily thrust it.

Carey was confused for an instant, but then answered, defiantly : "He'd of killed us if we hadn't got the drop on him, and I am ready to answer to a Court-Martial for my conduct, sir."

"Here, no insolence, my man ! My advice to you is to keep a civil tongue in your head," answered the little Doctor, peremptorily.

The stretcher had just started to the hospital, when Tommy, wild-eyed and dishevelled, appeared.

"How dare they say he's a thief!" he cried, furiously. "If you want to know the real thieves, look at there! *There* they stand, the cowards, accusing an innocent man, that can't speak for himself! Look at them, I say!" cried the boy, wildly, pointing to Carey and Grant.

"Stop this noise at once, Murphy!" commanded Captain Barron, sternly.

"I won't stop; not when I see the thieves about to escape!" Tommy's distress had made him, for the first time in his young life, disrespectful to his superior officer; indeed, so distracted was he, that he did not realize that it was Captain Barron he was addressing.

"Sergeant Carey, confine that man at once," was the Captain's reply to Tommy's rebellion.

So Tommy was led away in disgrace, with poor Tramp slinking along at his heels, feeling that his best friends were in some great trouble, but determined to stick by them.

Carroll raved in delirium for many days, and the workings of his fever-stricken mind all seemed to point towards his guilt. "A thief!" he would moan; "it will break mother's heart! Money? Of course there is money—lots of it; nearly a thousand dollars! Oh! the shame, the shame! branded as a thief!" he would mutter, over and over again.

It was a mere wreck of his former self that was discharged from the hospital the very day before his trial, for on the morrow a general Court-Martial, composed of a great array of rank, was to try Sergeant Carroll on the serious charges of burglary and deserting his Guard. If he were found guilty, it meant not only his present disgrace, but of course debarred him from ever obtaining his commission.

It was on Tommy's faithful arm that Carroll, weak and tottering, leaned as he made his way to the company barracks, where Carroll, of course, was to remain in close arrest until after his trial.

A non-commissioned officer is not sent to the Guard-house to be confined, but like an officer under arrest, is confined to the limits of his Company barracks.

Tommy at first did all the talking. He was evidently expounding some scheme to Carroll, for the latter seemed to become interested.

"We'll try it to-night, Sergeant; if any one can catch those thieves, it will be Tramp, for he hates 'em both. I made a novena to Our Lady, Carroll, and it was up to-day. *She* put this plan to clear you and find out the truth into my head," said the lad, shyly.

"Our Lady has never failed me yet, Tommy," replied Carroll, touching his cap reverently at the mention of his Lady's name; "not since I was a little shaver, and used to ask her aid at school during examinations. I, too, am sure she will enable us to prove the truth."

"It's pay day," continued Tommy, "and that's what those rascals have been waiting for, to make their *second* attempt on the Canteen money; the money is to be put in the Commissary * safe to-night. Lieutenant Brown thinks this is a dead secret, but *I* know

* The Commissary is a big military grocery store.

it, and you may be sure those fellows do, too. They have made every preparation to desert. Never mind how I know it; I haven't watched 'em like a hawk all this time without finding out a thing or two. Tell me again, Sergeant, what happened the night you were hurt."

"Well, Tommy, as I've told you before, I was on guard that night, and couldn't settle down inside the Guard-house. I was walking up and down the rear porch when I saw a faint light in the Canteen. Lieutenant Brown had told me of the money's being there; that's one thing that will tell heavily against me to-morrow," exclaimed Carroll, with a sigh.

"There won't be any trial to-morrow, Carroll," answered Tommy, confidently; "or if there is, *you* won't be the prisoner."

"I caught up my pistol and ran over there without giving any alarm to the guard—another mistake that will count against me; they say I deserted my guard; I am to be tried for that, too, you know, Tommy," he said bitterly.

Tommy nodded silently; he was too much interested to speak.

"I found the rear window open. I peeped in noiselessly and saw *Grant and Carey at work on the safe*; the outer door had been forced open. Grant was holding up the dark lantern, trying to throw the light so Carey could work; it was this I had seen. In moving the light from one position to another, they must have accidentally moved it across the window. I gave a run and a jump, was through the window and fairly on top of them before they realized what had happened. Carey recognized me, saw I was alone, then with an oath fired instantly, crying out: 'You think you've caught us, but we'll swear we found *you* robbing the safe; two against one, you young fool; fire your pistol, Grant, to give the alarm.' 'You cowardly blackguards,' I commenced, when I felt a crushing blow on the head, and remembered nothing more till I awoke, to find myself in the hospital, falsely accused of this crime. I have been to confession, so of course Father Harold knows I am innocent; and you believe me. But I do not think there is another soul in this post but thinks me guilty," finished Carroll, sadly.

"You're all wrong, Carroll; there's a good many don't take any stock in Carey. The *men*, I mean;

the officers don't know him as well as we do. But there's a young lady that doesn't believe you guilty, and who asked me to tell you so. It was only this morning she met me, and said, as pretty as you please: 'Murphy, I wish you would tell Mr. Carroll that his friends have every confidence in his innocence. Tell him not to be discouraged.'

"Honor bright, did she say all that?" said Carroll, flushing up and looking quite happy. There had been no name mentioned, but Carroll knew it was sweet Alice Barron who had sent him the cheering message.

"Now for my plan, Carroll. Tramp and I are going to watch the Commissary safe to-night. Oh! I've got the key all right enough," said the boy, in answer to a questioning look from Carroll. "And I think the two of us can catch two thieves. Eh, Tramp?"

The dog wagged his tail, as if in the affirmative.

"It's a risky plan, Tommy, and I don't half like it. See what they did to me. I do not see why you don't take your suspicions to the Officer of the Day."

"I've already told you I haven't a shadow of actual proof against them. You and I know they

are the thieves ; but who will believe us ? Besides, if I tell the Officer of the Day, they will get wind of it and be off to-night, as they have planned, without trying for the Canteen money ; but if they think they are not suspected, they will make a try for the money, you see. I promise not to run into danger, as you did. Tramp and I mean to watch them through a crack in the wall ; then, when I see them in the act of opening the safe, I will give the alarm quietly."

"If I could only be with you, Tommy," sighed Carroll, restlessly. It was very irksome to him to have to leave to anyone, even devoted Tommy, the task of discovering his traducers.

* * * * *

Tommy and Tramp took up their position in the old Commissary warehouse as soon as the eleven o'clock roll call had sounded. The boy had given the command, "On guard !" and so well was the dog trained by this time, that he knew well the meaning of the order was to lie still, not making a noise of any kind. Tommy did not want his expected visitors frightened away.

Slowly the minutes crawled away. Tommy thought they must have been there hours, when suddenly his

listening ear caught the sound of the click of a key, and presently the two men whom he had expected to see came into the little office where the safe stood.

The villains seemed to think themselves so secure from all chance of discovery, that they made no attempt to lower their voices; there was no one in the building save themselves, so they thought. They went quickly and systematically to work in a most professional manner, talking as they worked.

"What a fool Brown was to put that money here; he'll think so himself to-morrow," remarked Grant.

"I wish we could have waited to do this job until after to-morrow. I would like to have testified against Carroll. Of course, if we skip to-night the game is up; the court will never find him guilty. You don't think it would be safe to stay and face it out? I'd risk a good deal to send Carroll to Leavenworth."

"Well, I wouldn't," returned Grant. "I often wondered why you hate that fellow so; he hasn't ever injured you."

"He knocked me down in front of the men, and short of risking my life I'd do most anything to have my revenge," snarled Carey.

"I've no doubt you got just what you deserved, Carey, when the young fellow knocked you out," remarked Grant, coolly.

"What do you mean?" blustered Carey.

"Just what I said. Look here, man, we're a precious pair of rascals, and I've got the sense to acknowledge it; so don't give me any of your bluster."

As he spoke the outer door gave way, and Tommy, whispering sternly, "watch them, Tramp," sped noiselessly away to give the alarm.

Three minutes later Carroll was rendered nearly frantic with excitement, for from the Commissary came the sound of shots. The whole garrison, alarmed, rushed in that direction; lights flashed from the windows, and the voice of the Officer of the Day could be heard giving orders. Carroll did not dare break his arrest, but the suspense was terrible to him. It seemed ages to Carroll, but in reality it was only a few moments when Tommy, waving his arms wildly, came running towards him, crying out eagerly:

"It's all right, Carroll; they're caught at last—and you can thank Tramp that the principal rascal did not get away. In some way Carey saw the guard approaching, and without stopping to warn

his companion, he slid out of the door and was half way out of the window when Tramp caught him and held on to him like grim death. Carey must have struggled fiercely with the dog; he hit him with the butt of his pistol—of course he could not fire it, for fear of giving the alarm. Tramp finally got him by the throat, and I believe would have killed him if the wretch had not called for help."

Carroll fairly threw his arms around the brave dog's neck, while he made a fervent silent thanksgiving.

"The two rascals are safely handcuffed in the convicts' cells, and Sergeant Carroll is cleared." This last was addressed to the men of the different companies who had congregated in front of G Company.

"Three cheers for Carroll!" cried Tommy, enthusiastically, and several hundred voices joined in the roar of triumph.

"Three times three and a tiger!" cried the crowd, and again the silent parade rang with the shouts of triumph. Alone, with his guilty conscience, Carey scowled as he heard the joyful shouts.

"There, men, that will do;" said the voice of the Officer of the Day, as he appeared on the scene; "go

to your quarters now." As they obeyed his order, the young officer held out his hand to Carroll, saying :

"Sergeant, I congratulate you on your complete vindication. Grant, disgusted with the selfishness of Carey, has confessed all. By order of the Commanding Officer, I release you from arrest."

"Thank you, sir," said Carroll, his voice broken with emotion.

* * * * *

Both Carey and Grant were tried and sentenced to a full term of years in the State penitentiary. Carroll took advantage of the three months' furlough granted the candidates for a commission and went home to recruit for his final examination, which, when the time came, he passed with honor. He did not see his friends of the 31st Foot until a year later, when, as a Second Lieutenant of Infantry, he again visited the post where he had served and suffered as a soldier. He came to stay two weeks, but stayed two months; and when he left, pretty Alice Barron wore the crossed rifles of the 26th, Frank's regiment, and a big solitaire sparkled on the third finger of her little white hand.

Tramp came with his master, and sweet Alice could never make enough of the humble friend who did such faithful service for the man she loves.

As for Tommy, the merry, light-hearted little dandy bugler of Company G,—you would never guess it, so I will tell you that he is hard at work studying to be a priest, and it is through Carroll's generosity that he is enabled to pursue his vocation.

Father Harold is still at Fort Harvey, and will be satisfied if only the War Department will let him remain long enough to say the Nuptial Mass for his two favorites, Alice and Frank.

⇒ NAN'S THANKSGIVING. ⇒

NAN'S THANKSGIVING.

I THINK, nurse, this is queer Thanksgiving weather; last year, when I was at Grand-papa Allen's, we had snow and ice."

Nan sighed as she spoke. It was a very hot day, and everyone seemed too busy to play with or amuse the lonely little maid.

"Shure, darlin'," answered Nurse Nora, cheerfully, "there's a dale o' difference betwixt Maine and Arizona. Just wait until I finish this," holding up to view a dainty little pale blue frock, into which she was sewing fine lace ruffles, "and then we'll go for a walk."

"I want to go now," replied Nan, pettishly. "Mamma is busy in the kitchen; it smells awful good in there, but Sarah is so cross to-day, mamma told me to run away, and as soon as she finished, we'd go for a walk. I just hate waitin'."

"Oh, very well, Nan ; perhaps you do not care whether you have your new dress to wear to the Thanksgiving dinner to-morrow. I am sure it does not matter to me," and nurse coolly proceeded to fold away the pretty new gown.

But at that sight, Nan repented instantly of her fit of ill-temper.

"Oh, oh ! please, Nora dear, finish it now. I'll take Dinah for a walk down the 'Line.' Truly, I'll be good and wait patiently."

Not to have the new frock for her first dinner party, a dinner with real grown-up folks, the idea was too appalling.

Nan's father, Captain Haines, was an army officer, and Nan was a thorough little army girl, who enjoyed her strange, isolated life immensely ; not that she thought it strange, for she knew no other.

Fort Apache was a small, two-company post, barren, isolated, and oh ! so hot. Nan was the only child along the "Line," and to be the sole child on the "Line," is to be at once very important, very spoiled, and—*very* lonely.

The "Line" in a garrison means the long row or rows, for there may be more than one, of houses,

called "quarters," where the commissioned force of the post live. The great long buildings which stand just opposite the officers' quarters, with the parade or drill ground intervening, are the soldiers' barracks, and back of these, notwithstanding the present army regulation, which forbids a soldier to marry, live the married enlisted men. And this unofficial part of the garrison usually goes by the euphonious title of "Suds Alley," "Laundress Row" or "Tubs Flats," in evident allusion to the almost universal occupation of the inhabitants, who do the washing for the whole garrison.

Secretly, Nan thought this the pleasantest and most fascinating portion of the garrison. She quite envied the fortunate little dwellers, who were allowed to run bonnetless and barefooted at their own sweet will, and from her position of lofty but solitary grandeur, made shy advances towards acquaintance with the Finnegans and Murphys. But it was of no use. Nan might be as affable and condescending as possible, but the "Row" children much preferred their happy, if lowly, freedom to the elegant restraint of the "Line;" so Nan finally gave it up, and fell back upon her dolls, her

dog and a queer playmate, who was the torment of Nora's life.

This last was a young Indian squaw, whom Mrs. Haines often employed in the kitchen. She was really pretty for an Indian, with great soft eyes and straight black hair and rosy cheeks; at least that was the way she looked before her pappoose died, but since then Nan thought she had grown ugly; she looked always cross and sullen, and looked at the little girl with such a fierce longing that made the child uneasy. And yet Nakita loved Nan; no one could doubt that. She brought her strange Indian gifts, odd beads for her neck, a feather head-dress, bows and arrows, dainty little moccasins, elaborately headed and embroidered with porcupine quills.

Poor Nakita, since her own little dark-eyed daughter had been taken, seemed to lavish all the love of her wild, untrained heart upon the little white girl. She would take Nan's golden curls softly in the palm of her hand, patting them gently; all the while she would croon softly some Indian lullaby. Nan thought her a capital playmate. Nakita's arms were strong, her back so used to

carrying far heavier burdens than a child of five, that she made the finest kind of a horse ; she would walk, trot or gallop by the hour, with Nan swung Indian fashion from her strong young shoulders.

Mrs. Haines had not quite approved at first ; secretly, she had never quite gotten over her fears of Indian treachery. But the Captain only laughed when she spoke of Nan's strange playmate.

"Let them alone, my dear," he had said ; "Nan must have some one to romp with."

And, as it seemed absurd to think anything could happen to the child, the odd friendship was not interfered with.

Nora, however, who had been Mrs. Haines' nurse from the time she was a little child like Nan, had been violently opposed to her darling's having anything to do with a "black-eyed haythen,"—she never would give Nakita her pretty, soft Indian designation,—and, with the freedom of an old and valuable servant, had spoken her mind very freely on the subject, but to no effect. However, if she had seen Nan that afternoon, the little blue frock would never have been finished and I should have had no story to tell.

Nan had found Nakita sitting on the small bare plot of ground that ran along one side of their house, which was the corner one, and stood at the very end of the "Line," where the white, dusty trail led over the divide to the Agency.

Indians, both bucks and squaws, were constantly coming and going over this road, which led to the "store" where most of their trading was done, the men, grave and dignified, striding ahead, while behind came the squaws, carrying not only the pap-pooes, but all the household supplies besides.

Nakita had brought a new offering to the child. Done up in some corn husks were pieces of pink, sticky stuff, queer smelling and very unpleasant tasting, Nan thought; for, being a true little gentlewoman, she did not like to hurt the feelings of even a poor Indian woman, for Nakita had assured her, in the queer jargon the two talked, that it was "good, very good," and that she had made it especially for "Hair-like-yellow-corn-silk," Nan's Indian name.

The child ate very little of the sweet, nauseous stuff, for it sickened her and made her feel sleepy, so sleepy, indeed, that when Nakita picked her up and unceremoniously bundled her up in a small

clean "Navajo" blanket, she made no outcry or objection, but went off to sleep quite as contentedly as though she were safe in her own pretty brass crib at home, with Nora singing "Mary, the Star of the Sea," their favorite hymn.

Nakita, with her face concealed beneath a blanket, her shoulders stooped to adjust themselves to the weight of the sleeping child, could not have been distinguished from a dozen other squaws who had come and gone from the garrison that day.

Once she began the descent of the divide, which hid her from view from the garrison below, she quickened her walk into an Indian jog-trot and struck off sharply to the right, where an almost impassable rocky cañon led out into the wilderness of the cactus-grown desert. Before long she was joined by a fine-looking, yet fierce and sullen young buck. They met with no other salutation than the inexpressive "Ugh!" but he immediately took the lead, while she plodded wearily on behind.

The presence of this sullen, evil-looking young Indian would have thrown the little garrison into the wildest excitement, for, as every one knew, he was no other than the famous renegade who had

defied every effort made for his capture,—“Kid, the Apache.” But what everybody did not know was that he was Nakita’s husband, or she would never have been allowed to come and go so freely into the post.

* * * * *

When Nan awakened, she found herself lying before a crackling camp-fire, whose warmth felt very pleasant, for at this season and up in the mountains the nights were cool. Nan’s first impulse was to scream, she was so frightened ; but just then Nakita caught sight of her half-opened eyes, and passed her hand caressingly over the tumbled yellow curls, while she whispered softly, in her pretty broken English :

“Have no fear; the little one has come on a visit to Nakita. When the new moon comes, Nakita will take the little one safe to the lodge of ‘Gray Eagle,’” Captain Haines’ Indian name.

Nan’s face flushed ; she was so angry she forgot to be afraid.

“How dare you, Nakita ! You have taken me away without my papa’s permission. They—they will think I am lost, and they will not know where to look for me. But you will be punished ; they

will hunt for me with soldiers and guns, the guns that shoot to the sky and walk on four legs."

Nakita turned white beneath the clear brown of her sun-tanned cheek. What if the child were right and Gray Eagle should bring these deadly and mysterious guns against her people? For Nan had spoken of the Hotchkiss guns, which are mounted on the backs of mules, and so can follow the Indian up any trail his own well-trained war pony can carry him.

Nan's fearless declaration was ending in a low, half-choked sob, when, from overhead, a beautifully feathered and painted bow and arrow fell softly into her lap, while a laughing voice cried, in perfectly good English :

"It is better to laugh than to cry, so Père Joseph says, when we cut our fingers with the saw or let the sledge-hammer fall on our moccasined feet."

"Oh, dear !" cried Nan, half crossly ; " who are you ? Are you white ? "

"No ; but I have a white heart, and that is just as good."

The speaker was a tall Indian lad of about twelve years ; his eyes were honest, laughing ones, and he

smiled so gently at the little girl that her whole heart went out to him at once.

"My name," continued the lad, proudly, "is Juan José. I am the son of the chief, but now my father is dead and I am no one; I belong to the good fathers. Père Joseph is my father in God [God-father]. Perhaps you know him; he sometimes says the Mass for the soldiers at the fort."

"Has he long, white hair, and his face looks so good, but it is like this?" cried Nan, eagerly, wrinkling up her rosy countenance.

"That is he," replied the boy, gravely. "And now, little one, I will take care of you; you must not be afraid, and at the very first chance I will take you safely back. No one, not even 'Mesquito' [Kid, the Apache's Indian name], has as swift a pony as mine. Do you know this?" he said, and, as if struck by a sudden thought, he pulled from beneath his hunting-shirt a medal of Our Lady.

"Yes, Juan; it is the Blessed Mother," said Nan, reverently.

"Well," said the boy, "we will ask her to pray for us, and she will help me to get you home."

"Couldn't we get back by to-morrow, Juan?" exclaimed Nan, whose spirits were rising, now that she had found a protector. "To-morrow is Thanksgiving, you know, and we are to have *such* a good dinner."

"I know," responded Juan; "Thanksgiving, Washington's Birthday and Fourth of July are National holidays. We have a good dinner at the Mission to-morrow, too; but I think it would be too soon to run away; we will have a Thanksgiving dinner here. Be careful now; Nakita is watching us and listening; she cannot understand much English, but we must not let her suspect."

* * * * *

True to his promise, Juan provided a fine dinner the next day; they even had turkey, though it was a wild one, and some sweet wild berries, stewed in sugar, did duty for cranberry sauce.

Juan did his best to keep the child so interested and amused that she would not grieve herself sick. He succeeded fairly well during the day, but night after night Nan sobbed herself to sleep, while Nakita kept jealous watch by her side.

Though these were his own people, the boy felt they suspected him; he saw that he was closely

watched. Of course, he was perfectly free to return to the Mission school whenever he pleased, but to take Nan was another thing. He knew, too, that it would be a long time before the soldiers would discover this hiding-place; so, on the third night, when Nan's heart-broken sobs reached his pitying ears, he determined to try his plan the very next night. He found a chance to whisper his instructions to her early the next morning; then, taking his pony, disappeared from the camp. Nakita was delighted to see him go.

It was near supper-time, still light. Nan had put on her pretty new moccasins, and darted here and there from one end of camp to the other. Nakita was busy; so, when the child disappeared from view, fully three minutes had passed before she noticed it. The faint clatter of hoofs caught her keen ears, and instinctively she raised her eyes to a point at the top of the divide where, for a short space, the trail, white and dusty, gleamed out distinctly. A small black pony, carrying *two* figures, dashed along the open; then a sudden turn in the trail hid them from sight.

Nakita's wild scream of anger brought every Indian in the camp to her side, and instantly a small party had started in pursuit of the runaways.

Nan never forgot that ride; she is a big girl now, in fact a "Senior" at the Sacred Heart Convent in C——, but the memory of that wild dash comes to her even in the quiet halls of the cloister.

The pony flew like the wind; she could hardly catch her breath. Juan bade her hold on to him tight, then shut her eyes and pray, pray hard. Then came the angry shouts of their pursuers, and once a rifle ball whistled past them, meant to bring down their faithful pony.

On, on they flew; soon they could no longer hear their enemies. Darkness had come on suddenly, swiftly; still they rode on. Juan knew his way as well in the dark as in the brightest sunlight.

* * * * *

The Sentry on Number Three was walking slowly up and down, half asleep, when suddenly something flashed out of the blackness of the surrounding prairie. His startled "Halt!" had hardly rung out, when such a tired little voice called out:

"It's me, Sentry,—me and Juan; and I am so tired, and I want my mamma."

"God bless my soul!" cried the man, instantly aroused and excited; "if it ain't the Captain's little

girl." And his shout of "Corporal of the Guard No. Three!" soon brought the Officer of the Day on the scene, with the entire garrison at his heels.

Captain Haines himself was out in command of one of the search parties sent out to hunt for the lost child. But Nan was soon clasped to her distracted mother's heart, while poor old Nora kissed and sobbed over the little moccasined feet, which was the only portion of Nan's small body she could get hold of.

"Nan is found!" was the signal flashed by the young signal officer with his big torches from the top of the high hill back of the post, in hopes the search party might see it; and the big reveille gun was fired every ten minutes for an hour, a signal agreed upon to announce the safe return of the little girl, for there were several scouting parties looking for her. The signals were successful, and Captain Haines, worn and spent with hard riding and loss of sleep, soon had his darling in his arms.

Juan had not been forgotten meantime; he was quite the hero of the hour, but took all the praise so modestly as to charm everyone.

"Tell me, Juan," Captain Haines has asked, after the excitement has somewhat quieted down, "why did you not wait for night to make your escape?"

"Because of the trail, sir; it is bad and dangerous by day, but at night I would not risk it."

"Well, Juan," interrupted Lieutenant Dane, "I hope you will be rested sufficiently by to-morrow to show 'B' Troop to the 'Kid's' hiding-place."

"I am not too tired, sir," replied the boy, simply; "but they are my people, and, bad as he is, I cannot betray my people, sir."

"The boy is right!" exclaimed Captain Haines, authoritatively.

Just then Nan caused instant diversion by exclaiming, plaintively:

"I suppose, mamma, the Thanksgiving dinner is all eaten up."

"No, indeed, my darling; we have all been much too sad to think of dinners of any kind. But we shall have a grand Thanksgiving dinner to-morrow, and Juan shall stay and eat it with us," replied Mrs. Haines.

* * * * *

When Juan was old enough to leave the Mission school, Captain Haines bought and stocked for him a small cattle ranch near the good fathers, and here he lives to-day a good and successful man.

As for Nakita, no one ever saw her again, and her wicked husband still defies the efforts made to capture him.

Captain Haines has always thought that "Kid" himself planned Nan's capture, and that he meant to hold the child for a large ransom, and, that his wicked plan failed, was owing to the heroism of a simple Indian lad.

HOW FRANK WON THE RACE.

HOW FRANK WON THE RACE.

FORT GASTON was a large army post a few miles distant from the county seat of Potter, a good-sized prairie town of two or three thousand inhabitants.

The State University (as the sparsely-attended normal school was grandiloquently called) was here. A great rivalry had existed for some time between the Freshmen Foot-Ball Team and the Fort Gaston Eleven, which had finally culminated in the "Varsity" team challenging the army boys to play them a championship game.

Frank Ridgway, home on his summer vacation from the famous old Catholic University of Notre Dame, was captain of the post team. He had played half-back in the college team and was a famous "tackler." Their "coach" was Lieutenant Warren, a recent West Point graduate, where he had won great distinction on the foot-ball field.

Feeling that these two were a host in themselves, the army boys promptly accepted the challenge. They felt very confident of winning, and went into the most severe training, practising hard each day, learning a bran new code of signals that Frank and Mr. Warren had devised between them.

There was only one cloud that dimmed the bright horizon of their hopes, and, perhaps, the girls felt it even more than the boys. The Fort Gaston Football Team, as they proudly called themselves, possessed no uniforms, with the exception of Frank, who had a "daisy outfit," the other boys said. Mr. Warren had generously offered his uniform, but as he was six feet two, in his stocking feet, and correspondingly broad shouldered, the boys had been of necessity obliged to decline the loan.

The girls, there were four of them,—Mary Seton, Edith Wood, Beatrice Wallace and Dorothy Dean,—all, save Mary, had brothers in the Eleven, and they thought it very hard that the Post Champions should not be provided with uniforms, particularly as those *horrid* college boys had just gotten a bran new outfit for their entire team. Fathers and mothers had been appealed to in vain, but foot-ball outfits were rather

expensive affairs, and the boys were told they must do without, and that it certainly would not interfere with their playing.

Boys and girls had held many a long and anxious consultation, but as fully fifty dollars was needed, no practicable way suggested itself. One day, however, when *the* Eleven and the four girls, making quite a little cavalcade on their prancing steeds, had gone off for a "long-distance ride," as they called it, just striking right across the open breezy prairie, with nothing to stop their headlong course, not even a barbed-wire fence, and under foot the short, soft "buffalo" grass of the western plains stretching away indefinitely as far as the eye could reach, tempting the little riding party into many a mad race. As both boys and girls were fearless riders, having been brought up in the saddle, as most children of cavalry officers are, there was not much danger in their wild gallops.

Frank's steed, a tall, long-necked roan, who rejoiced in the name of "Bully," had been a cavalry horse, recently condemned and sold on account of strained knees, which made him unfit for field service. When Frank had bought the horse at the auction sale, old McGuire, who had been First

Sergeant of "B" Troop, to which Bully had belonged, whispered to Frank :

"Bid on that horse, me boy ; you'll get a good mount cheap as dirt, for old Bully kin go like blazes. He's won many a race for old "B" Troop."

He had won many an impromptu race for Frank, also ; none of the horses of the younger portion of the garrison could come up to him. Frank was very fond and proud of him, and bragged a great deal of the racing qualities of his steed, quoting old Sergeant McGuire as an undeniable authority.

Perhaps it was hearing so much of Bully's racing powers that suggested to Mary Seton her plan of raising the money for the uniforms. It was a tearing run across the long stretch of level prairie, in which Frank, on old Bully, had distanced even Edith Wood's fleet little Indian pony, that made Mary Seton think of her plan to provide the coveted uniforms for the Fort Eleven.

"Frank !" she exclaimed, suddenly, "why don't you run Bully in the races next week ? You know old Sergeant McGuire said Bully had won more races than any horse in 'B' Troop. *That's* where you'll get your uniforms, boys," turning around in

her saddle to survey her little audience. "The County Fair Commissioners offer a purse of fifty dollars in the 'free for all race.'"

"Just the thing!" exclaimed Frank, excitedly; "fellows, Mary's suggestion is splendid. Hurrah for Mary Seton and the Fort Gaston Eleven! Give her three times three and a tiger, boys!"

As the boys finished their enthusiastic demonstration, Mary meantime blushing and smiling at this unexpected ovation, Charlie Williams asked, suddenly:

"How did you know so much about this race, Mary?"

"Well, only this morning I was down in the village; while I was waiting for the ambulance,* I heard some of the town boys talking of it, and that horrid Bob Evans said he meant to ride that poor old plug of his; but somehow I never thought of dear old Bully until just now, when he beat all of us so easily."

"Say, girls, and fellows, too, I mean to try it; it's our only chance to get those uniforms, and I believe Bully *can* and *will* win; but we've got to

* An army wagon.

keep it a dead secret, for if mother hears I am to ride she will never let me; you know she is awfully nervous about horses," finished Frank, apologetically; for he could not understand his mother's failing in this respect. "We'll tell old Jones, the stable sergeant, for he knows heaps about horses and racing; he used to be a jockey before he entered the service; he'll help us I know."

The officers and ladies at Fort Gaston soon discovered that there was some tremendous mystery on foot among the foot-ball team and their particular chums, the four girls,—Edith Wood, Mary Seton, Bee Wallace and Dorothy Dean,—for whenever these young people met it was to exchange secret signs and winks and exciting whispered communications of a very private nature, such as "he made the half mile this morning in 1:40 and Jones says he can do better."

Old Sergeant Jones was often quoted in these days, and was made so much of, listened to so deferentially by all these young people, for even the girls had been persuaded to surreptitious visits to "the racer" in his training quarters, as the boys magnificently spoke of his stall in the old condemned cavalry stable, that his head was quite turned.

The girls had a little secret of their own, too, and met every morning at Mary Seton's, where their tongues flew quite as fast as their needles. They had determined that Frank should sport his college colors, the blue and white of Notre Dame, in his cap and jacket.

"Wouldn't Sister Seraphine be surprised to see her model pupil engaged in making a jockey's suit?" said Beatrice Wallace, teasingly.

"I wonder if she would," replied Mary, thoughtfully. "Do you know, girls, I have wondered if we were doing right. Riding a race for money seems very like gambling; then, too, Frank's mother is so afraid of horses. Supposing he got hurt, I should never forgive myself."

"It's too late to moralize now, Mary dear. What we've got to do now is to finish our champion's headgear." Poising the gay blue and white silk cap on her yellow curls, Bee gently pulled Mary's ear.

"Mary, you're very provoking sometimes; you are always making suggestions, jolly ones, too, but before we have time to half carry them out, you commence with your scruples and self-reproaches until all the fun is gone," said Dorothy Dean, severely.

"I know it, girls; but I have gotten you into so many scrapes, I wonder you ever listen to my plans. Dear Sister Seraphine says I am too impulsive; I do not stop to think. She is right, too. I pray daily to Our Blessed Mother for help. Perhaps it is because I have no mother, girls, that I am always in mischief," says the girl, so sorrowfully that her companions drop their work and fly to console her.

"You're a darling, Mary Seton!" exclaims warm-hearted Bee. "If the rest of us were half as good as you, we might be content."

"If Frank's father were only here, or if Father Woodman were only at home," sighed Mary, "I would persuade Frank to ask his advice; but this is his mission week, and he won't be back until the close of the Fair. He understands young people so well, and always sympathizes in all their plans. I am sure we could trust him to give us good advice."

"Perhaps you girls forget that *to-morrow* is the eventful day and not a *week hence*," says Dorothy, sarcastically; "so perhaps we had better sew more and talk less, if we expect to finish these things in time."

* * * * *

The last day of the County Fair, on which the eventful race, open to all, was to come off, dawned bright and unclouded. Right after guard-mounting, the girls slipped off to see Frank take a final spin around the improvised track, which old Sergeant Jones had made well hidden from view, behind the quartermaster storehouses. True, the Officer of the Day, in making his rounds, had discovered this training ground, but on Sergeant Jones assuring him that it was "a bit o' secret of the boys, wid no harrum at all, Leftenant," he had not interfered.

The girls had presented their offering of jacket and cap the evening before, and, in Frank's delight and the enthusiastic praises of the boys, Mary had quite forgotten the pricks of conscience.

The old Sergeant had been mainly occupied the whole week in training the young rider, for the old horse knew his business well.

"If that animil ain't bin on a race track afore, you kin bet I'm no judge," he had said over and over again.

The foot-ball team sat on the ground to watch Frank "warm himself up a little," as he called out knowingly; but the Sergeant gallantly brought out

empty grain boxes for the girls to sit on. They quite held their breath while Frank dashed around the track, and the Sergeant, with his large, old-fashioned "stop" watch, timed the performance.

"Oh, isn't it dangerous, Sergeant Jones?" asked Mary, anxiously, for she still had a great weight upon her mind.

"Not at all, miss, for a fine rider like Frank there; he has as good a seat and as steady a hand as any old cavalryman, which is saying a deal, miss."

"Sergeant, can you not take those bandages off Bully's knees before the race?" enquires Edith Wood; "they do look so untidy, you know."

"Ha! ha!" laughs the old soldier and ex-jockey. "You'll excuse me smilin', miss, but thim bandages, as you call 'em, is very necessary. You see, miss, the old horse ain't so young as he was, and, though he is a rare good un onct he is warmed up, still his knees is his weak point, and we must strengthen 'em as much as possible."

* * * * *

In some way it leaked out that Frank Ridgway was to ride a race at the Fair, and every officer and lady in the garrison determined to go. Poor Mrs.

Ridgway was the only one not in the secret. The girls could only hope she would not think of going. But whilst Mary was at luncheon, Frank came flying in to announce that Colonel Haines had just sent over and asked Mrs. Ridgway to drive out to the Fair with them.

"Oh, dear!" said Mary, "how I wish I had never heard about Bully's racing qualities; then I should have never thought of the racing plan. I—I suppose you wouldn't give it up, Frank?"

"Isn't that just like a girl?" says the boy, scornfully; "the moment the slightest difficulty comes she wants to give it up. Give it up? Why of course I wont; so think of some better plan than that."

"It is so unfortunate that your father is not at home, Frank."

"Well, I don't believe father would mind one bit; it's mother. She's so awfully afraid of horses, and then [he hesitates a little] she might not approve of my getting money in this way."

"Oh, Frank! have you thought of that, too?" says the girl, eagerly. "I am sure it isn't right, and when I suggested this horrid plan, I never thought of a thing but the money and what an easy

way it would be to get it. Oh, Frank! do, do give it up."

"Don't be a goose, Mary Seton! I'm not going to be a laughing stock for anybody."

"Very well, Frank," Mary said, meekly enough. "I will just run over and ask Colonel and Mrs. Haines to say nothing about the race until after it is over; your mother is so near-sighted, I do not believe she will recognize you."

* * * * *

When the saddling-up bell rings and a moment later Frank, in his resplendent cap and jacket, is mounted in the most professional manner by old Sergeant Jones, who has come to "see the boy through it," he feels that the eyes of his little world are on him.

"Steady, boy, steady," the Sergeant whispers, for Frank is trembling with excitement; "don't hurry the old horse too much, an' he'll come in ahead sure. You've only one you need fear,—that Bob Evans,—an' he's a tricky one he is, so keep an eye on him."

Frank tries his best to pay attention and listen to Jones' instructions, but his heart is beating so loud and there is a mist before his eyes; but before he

had ridden slowly to the judges' stand, his nervous fears are over and he feels as cool and as confident as he ever has in his life.

As the riders get ready for the start, riding slowly



up and down the track in front of the grand stand, Mrs. Ridgway suddenly clutches Mary's arm.

"Mary!" she cries, a little wildly, "surely that cannot be Frank!"

The girl's silence, and paling cheeks assure her that she is right.

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"Oh, child! you knew of this and did not tell me, or, at least, try to stop that headlong boy!" she cried, reproachfully, while poor Mary, feeling more miserable than she ever had before in all her life, can find nothing to say.

A sudden shout tells her that the horses are off. Mary just sees that the blue and white jacket is well in the lead, when she shuts her eyes and prays fervently.

"Dear Lord! forgive my rashness, my sinful impulsiveness. Blessed Mother! pray for Frank. Oh, Mother! keep him safely."

Her prayer has become an incoherent plea for help, when a sudden cry of consternation from the crowd startles her.

"Great heavens!" cries Colonel Haines, "Frank's stirrups have broken! Good boy! brave boy!" he cries, excitedly, as Frank, undaunted, does not try to slacken his horse's speed.

They are on the home stretch now, each horse and rider straining every nerve to win. Mrs. Ridgway has utterly lost her self-control. She sits weeping with terror, and shudders to think that Frank is in the midst of those madly-flying horses. But Mary

does not even heed her now ; though pale to her very lips, she is quite calm.

"Thank God ! it will be over in a moment," for she hears the crowd yelling, "Bully wins ! Bully wins ! Hurrah for Frank and old B——"

And then suddenly the cry of triumph is changed into a groan of horror.

"My God ! Frank is down !" she hears Colonel Haines exclaim ; but his voice sounds faint and as if from a distance.

For the space of a second she seems to lose consciousness ; as she slowly revives, she hears the Colonel's commanding voice shout :

"Sit down ! sit down ! Let me get to the boy."

The sudden shock seemed to have paralyzed Mrs. Ridgway with terror, for, with staring eyes and ears deaf to the exclamations of those near her, she sat unable to move her eyes from the group gathered round the fallen horse and rider.

From the conversation of those around them and from Mrs. Haines, who had witnessed the accident, Mary soon gathered exactly what had happened. It seemed just as the horses passed the winning post, Bully leading a good half neck, Bob Evans, who was just behind him, had given his horse a vicious

dig with his cruel cowboy spurs. The horse, maddened by pain, had plunged violently, knocking into poor Bully, whose knees, already weakened by the fast and furious run, gave way, and horse and rider came to the ground in a confused heap.

By the time Colonel Haines had reached Frank's side, he found the Post surgeon and old Sergeant Jones already on the field, the former making a hasty examination of the boy's injuries, while the latter was occupied in denouncing Bob Evans and talking loudly of foul play.

Dr. Hall soon pronounced Frank's injuries not fatal, though very painful. He had broken his right leg below the knee, and three ribs broken made him groan in spite of himself at the least movement.

An improvised stretcher was soon gotten ready, and the wounded hero was conveyed in comparative comfort to the ambulance, while Colonel Haines hurried back to reassure poor Mrs. Ridgway.

Nobody but old Jones had noticed the instant, queer look of relief that had come in Bob Evans' hardened face when the doctor had said that Frank was not dead, but had only fainted from pain.

Everyone thought it was merely an accident that had caused Frank's sudden fall, but the old Sergeant felt he knew better.

"'Tisn't no accident," he kept on muttering all the way home; "that young Evans done it a purpose, for *I see'd him.*"

* * * * *

That same evening Mary Seton, with bitter tears, confessed to Mrs. Ridgway her share in Frank's accident.

The next evening, as Frank lay comfortably installed in the pretty upstairs sitting-room, pleasanter for an invalid than his own little den, his mother had said, another penitent, a rough and sullen one, had been ushered in, following closely behind Father Woodman.

"Well, Frank," said the good priest, cheerily, "you see I have heard all about your accident and have come to scold you well. Here is some one, however, who has to ask your forgiveness, and I am sure you will not refuse it him when I tell you that he is heartily sorry and has come to tell you so."

Father Woodman left the two boys alone, and Bob Evans soon stumbled gruffly through his confession.

"I was boun' ter win dat race; we needed de money ayful bad. Fader he's a regular bad one; he left us a year ago and we ain't never heerd from him. We owe de rent for de last six months and de landlord said he'd turn us out Monday if t'want paid. I knew I'd have to sell my horse Kitty ter do it, an' it made me feel plumb wicked. When I see'd you was bound ter beat, I thought I'd stop you some way. But t'want no use; I lost de race and de money, and nearly kilt you, and now Kitty'll have to be sold just de same. But I'm awful sorry I hurt you, and I hope you'll forgive me," he finished, abruptly.

"Of course I do, old fellow!" cried Frank, heartily. "I was wrong to ride in that race. I guess we've both had our punishment. But see here, you needn't sell your horse; I can lend you the fifty dollars for the rent and you can repay me whenever you can."

"Oh, I say you're a brick!" cried poor Bob, his face flushing with delight. "I'll be able to pay you back soon, too, for Father Woodman has hired me to work for him, and mother'll soon be able to work now, and we'll git along all right."

"Well, have you two shaken hands and made friends?" said Father Woodman's voice. "Come, boys, we will just say an Our Father and a Hail Mary."

It was pleasant to hear the boyish voices dwell earnestly on the words, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them who trespass against us."

* * * * *

The Fort Gaston Foot-Ball Team played the 'Varsity Eleven a closely contested game, in which, however, they came off victorious, even though their gallant captain, laid up with his broken bones, was, of course, unable to play.

But Bob Evans made a splendid substitute. With a heart full of gratitude towards his young benefactor, he had made up by hard work and constant practice what he lacked in actual experience.

But, after all, when the day of the great ball game arrived, the Fort Gaston Eleven played without their new uniforms, and the girls never knew *why*, although Mary Seton rather suspected what had become of Frank's fifty-dollar prize money.

❧ TEDDY'S TRIP TO THE FAIR. ❧

TEDDY'S TRIP TO THE FAIR.

IT was a perfect morning in early May, the sun just warm enough to make the children of Fort Yankton linger beneath the shady cottonwoods that bordered the four sides of the large grassy square called the parade ground.

Guard mounting was going on, the band just "sounding off," as it is called, that is marching past the new guard and the adjutant to some lively air. The children were always delighted to hear Mr. Collins, the adjutant, give the order to "sound off," for they were very severe little critics, and did not at all approve of cutting their favorite ceremony short as the adjutant sometimes did when in a hurry or the weather was cold and windy.

"When I get to be a colonel, I shall have 'Guard mount' *twice* a day," remarked Tom, Colonel Benton's son and heir, who seemed to think his father's rank would be hereditary.

"I'll come to your regiment, Tom, if you do, 'cause I just love the band!" cried little Teddy. "If the band leader was only an officer, I would rather be him than most anything else," he continued.

"Pooh!" remarked Tom, scornfully, "that's because you're a little kid and don't know any better."

"I know as much as you do, Tom Benton," commenced Teddy, hotly, when Marjorie caused instant diversion by exclaiming:

"Oh, boys, look! there is an organ man *and* a monkey."

A wild shout of joy greeted this announcement, and, with a rush, the little group flew down the Line to the big entrance gate to see all they could of this most delightful novelty.

Few of the children knew anything of ordinary city sounds and sights; born at isolated frontier army posts, where the Infantry regiment to which their fathers belonged had served for fourteen years, they knew little of life outside a garrison, thinking the free, untrammelled existence they led the most delightful one in the world, as perhaps it was. The boys, fully imbued from their cradles up, that "to be an officer like papa, is the finest thing out."

Teddy was the youngest, and, as we have seen, wavered a little in his ambition ; still, as Tom said, he was so little he did not really know his own mind.

It was vacation now, and the children fairly lived out of doors, only stopping in the house long enough to eat and sleep ; they all had ponies, and, boys and girls alike, rode like little centaurs ; they played tennis and base-ball. Hadn't the "Post nine," in their gorgeous red, white and blue uniforms, batted the "Town nine" way out of sight? And hadn't the Post girls beaten the village tennis club in both ladies' doubles and singles?

But now all these glorious victories were forgotten, or at least in a fair way to be, by the fact that two of the town children had won the prize, offered by the school trustees, of a free trip to the World's Fair, given respectively to the best scholars in the grammar and high school departments.

The children from the garrison had been barred out of the contests on the ground that they were not "residents." This decision had caused immense indignation in the hearts of the Army children. Teddy, although he and Marjorie did not attend the village school, Mrs. Lovel preferring to teach them

herself, was particularly indignant over this partiality, and announced that, if Tom wanted it, he would get his money out of the savings bank,—and it was over a hundred or a thousand dollars, he wasn't quite sure, but his grandpapa knew,—and then Tom could go, too, and show those children that they weren't so smart after all.

It was sad, but true, that none of the Fort Yankton people were going to the great Fair; it was a very long and expensive journey, and most of them could not very well afford it, and those who could did not care much about it.

Teddy's generous offer was declined, but none of the little people could have dreamed that Teddy himself was to represent them in Chicago, although under anything but pleasant circumstances.

With excited explanations in broken English and frantic gestures, the children, with Tom at their head, conveyed the dirty, evil-looking Italian, with his organ and a thin, tired-looking monkey, to a row of benches placed in front of the commanding officers' quarters for the convenience of stray visitors; then they rushed into their respective homes for nickles and dimes to reward their expected entertainer.

The performance was a great success; the dejected-looking little monkey seemed to find the children's enthusiasm contagious, and capered and danced and did all his little tricks so well that for once his cruel master forgot to beat him.

Then the man struck up a familiar air, and Teddy at once joined in with a voice so sweet and true, and so marvelously strong for a child of his age, that the man stopped as if suddenly struck dumb.

With extravagant compliments and many protestations of delight, he made the boy sing again and again; but when the children asked for another tune on the organ, he refused somewhat abruptly and disagreeably, and, asking Teddy the way to the men's barracks, shouldered his organ and walked off, the child, flattered by his praise and fascinated by the novelty of the foreigner and the red-coated monkey, running by his side, eager and proud to be of use.

"Teddy, don't go any farther than the 'Canteen,'" called Marjorie, for those were "limits," as Captain Lovel called it,—the "Canteen" at one end of the Parade and the adjutant's office at the other; beyond this the two children were forbidden to go without special permission.

But Teddy's little head had been completely upset by this new and fascinating friend. He paid no heed to Marjorie's warning, but walked on, talking eagerly all the while. Marjorie had retired to the shade of the big side porch with her little girl friends to play "lady," and gave no further heed to Teddy.

It was strange, and everyone thought of it afterwards, as the child walked down the Line towards the rear entrance of the Post, which led directly to the small prairie town, with his disreputable companion, with exception of the sentry walking "Post" in front of the "Guard House," not a soul was in sight.

Colonel Benton had marched his command some distance from the garrison for battalion drill; the nurses had not yet appeared with their little charges, and the mammas had not returned from the daily marketing trip to the little town close by, so Teddy's breach of discipline, unfortunately for him, was entirely unobserved.

As they passed the outer gate of the Reservation, his conscience pricking him, the child turned as if to go back, but his new friend said, coaxingly :

"You coma wid me'a, see monkey eata 'is dinna ; he vera funna. You coma an' I giva you soda wata ; vera hota to-day."

The man spoke brokenly yet fluently, and Teddy understood perfectly. He wanted to see the monkey eat awfully, and it *was* hot, and a drink of cold soda water would taste so good, and mamma need never know. Besides, he wasn't a baby any longer ; a boy five years old could take care of himself. So he tossed his golden curls defiantly and walked on determinedly.

Presently they came on an old unoccupied house on the outskirts of the town, but quite near the railroad station.

"Is this where you live?" cried Teddy, curiously, as the man motioned to him to enter.

"Go in, go in !" the man answered, impatiently, shoving the child in, shutting the door and slipping a rusty old bolt in its place.

The room seemed very dark after the blaze of sunshine outside, but Teddy soon distinguished the figure of a man lying in some damp, musty straw. He started up at their entrance, and was soon

engaged with Teddy's friend in an exciting argument of some kind.

The two men gesticulated wildly, shaking their dirty fists at each other, but finally seemed to come to an amicable agreement, for they shook hands and embraced. Then Teddy's friend turned to him and said :

"You must have your drink first, you are so warm."

The other man had disappeared in the back room, from which he presently emerged with a glass of foaming soda lemonade; it looked very tempting, and, as Teddy was very thirsty after his long, hot walk, he drained the glass.

It was odd, but no sooner had Teddy finished his lemonade than he began to feel so sleepy. The little golden head began to nod drowsily, the long lashes closed over the big brown eyes, and in five minutes the child was in the deep stupor caused by some powerful drug.

The evil faces of the two men gleamed with wicked triumph, and their next proceedings were very curious. Quickly and with deft fingers they stripped the sleeping child; then with a soft sponge

they bathed his whole body with a curious-looking stuff the color of weak coffee, only it made a permanent stain; then with sharp scissors they cropped the long yellow curls, which came nearly to his waist, close to his neck; then from another bottle the golden hair was dyed a jet black; lastly, from out of a dirty old bundle was produced a cheap red cotton *dress*, covered with gilt spangles; red morocco shoes and a cap with a gilt tassel completed the fantastic costume.

The transformation, though done hurriedly, was very complete, and in the little Italian *girl* no one would ever have recognized Teddy Lovel.

* * * * *

As the noon flyer, straight through from San Francisco, made its one-minute stop at the station of Yankton, a quiet-looking foreigner, with his little sick *daughter* wrapped up in an old red shawl, stepped aboard; at the same time an Italian organ-grinder, with a forlorn little monkey, boarded the *west-bound* train, and stood gazing eagerly at the flyer until the flutter of a red bandanna from the rear window of the train caught his eye, when, with a sigh of relief, he entered his own car.

PART II.

Colonel Benton, riding at the head of a long column of hot, tired, dusty men, halted his command at the railroad crossing,—for the Union Pacific tracks ran right through the military reservation,—to allow the “'Frisco flyer” plenty of headway.

As the long train passed them by with a whirl and rush, Captain Lovel remarked to Mr. Davis, the Second Lieutenant of his Company, mopping his hot, streaming brow the while :

“Davis, I would give a good deal to be aboard that train traveling towards ‘God’s country’ at the rate of forty-five miles an hour.”

“Oh, if *wishing* would take me east, I wouldn’t even wait for the flyer,” laughingly answered the young officer.

Ah ! if Captain Lovel had only known of one little passenger on that particular train, he would have risked all to have boarded it, even life itself.

As the battalion broke ranks, Captain Lovel was surprised not to see a gallant little figure, with golden curls flying and arms and legs working like animated wind-mills, rush out to greet him. This

was Teddy's usual custom, and the ride home on his big, handsome papa's shoulder was the crowning delight. But no Teddy was to be seen, and the Captain, with a half disappointed, half reproachful feeling that to-day his little son should have forgotten him, walked home alone.

"Where is Ted, Marjorie?" he asked of the little girl, who, absorbed in her play, was still on the porch.

"Oh, I think he is with Tom Benton and the rest of the boys, but I haven't seen him in a long time. Perhaps, papa, he may be in the back yard; shall I run and see?"

"Never mind, little daughter. I've a crow to pick with the young man; he didn't come to meet me after drill this morning," and soon Captain Lovel's voice was heard echoing through house and grounds, but no Teddy answered. Nurse joined in the hunt, and Marjorie was sent to all the houses along the row to ask if Teddy was there.

But it soon transpired that no one had seen the little fellow since he had volunteered to show the organ man the way to the men's quarters, and it did not take long for Captain Lovel to ascertain

that the fascinating Italian not only had not made his appearance at the barracks, but that the few men left in the garrison from the morning drill had not seen him at all.

Even yet no suspicion of the truth dawned upon the Captain ; at the very most, he thought that the attractions of the organ and monkey had proved too great a temptation to the child, and that he had followed their fortunate owner in his tramp around the town ; so, only pausing long enough to caution both nurse and Marjorie on no account to alarm mamma, he started down town to search for the little truant. On his way to the village, he met Mr. Davis and told him of Teddy's unprecedented escapade.

"I shall have to punish him severely," remarked the Captain, conclusively.

"Oh, well, Captain, boys will be boys, you know, and Ted is such an all-round good little chap, let him off this time," answered good-natured Mr. Davis. Then he continued : "I will look through the town south of the railroad, Captain, and, if you will search this portion, we will soon have the young rascal. I will rejoin you at the post-office in half an hour."

So they parted, but, as we know, their search was fruitless. When the two men met according to their agreement, there was a look of anxiety, of half defined fear, in Captain Lovel's eyes that made Mr. Davis keep his anxious thoughts to himself.

"What can be the meaning of this, Davis?" asked the Captain. "Since I left you, I've been through every street and alley, and half a dozen men of the Company, whom I met, have been searching, too, but man, monkey and organ seem to have simply disappeared. No one in town has seen the man since early this morning, before he came up to the Post."

Just then McGuire, one of the soldiers who had been looking for the child, came up and, after saluting, remarked, hesitatingly :

"If the Captain will excuse me, I think, sir, Teddy must have gone past back to the Post, for the ticket agent says the Eyetalyn has left town ; he bought a ticket for Cheyenne this morning, sir, and there was no one wid him save the monkey and the organ."

McGuire says this last with such an air of relief that it was plain enough what his suspicion had been.

"If the Captain will just wait here," McGuire says, eagerly, "I will just run up to the garrison and inquire."

"Thank you, McGuire," replies his Captain; "go to my quarters and find out if Ted is there, but be careful not to alarm Mrs. Lovel."

"Yes, sir;" then, with a quick salute, notwithstanding the intense heat of mid-day on the plains, McGuire started off towards the Post on a good, smart run.

"Well, Davis, I suppose all this time you are laughing in your sleeve at my absurd anxiety," says Captain Lovel, as if he wished and rather longed to hear his fears pronounced ridiculous. But Mr. Davis answers, gravely enough :

"Not at all, Captain. I think your anxiety only natural, and I confess that I shall feel greatly relieved when McGuire comes back and tells us that the runaway is taking his lunch quietly at home, while we are running all round town after him."

But McGuire does not return for some time, and, when at last they see him coming down the street, his general air of dejection shows only too plainly his answer before he has time to say a word.

"It's no use, Captain ; he ain't there," begins the man in such evident grief and anxiety that, for the first time in his whole military career, he forgets to salute his superior officer ; but no one notices the omission ; "and Sergeant Dennis, sir, he's had the whole Company turned out to look for him ; but he ain't been seen, sir, since he walked off airyly this morn wid that bloody Eyetalyn. Say the word, sir, and I'll be after him by the next train."

By the time McGuire had finished, Captain Lovel had grown quite white, and a look of terrible trouble settles like a cloud over his handsome, genial face, from whence it is not lifted for many sad, weary months to come.

"I can do better than that, McGuire. I will telegraph the authorities at Cheyenne to hold up this man, and I will go up on to-night's train. Come, there is not a moment to lose, Davis. I will send my dispatch first, then interview the ticket agent. Here, McGuire, take this note to the Commanding Officer. I have asked the Colonel to turn out the whole Command," he says to Mr. Davis, "but I have no hopes that they will find my boy. I believe he has been stolen."

This programme is at once carried out after a rather unsatisfactory talk with the agent, who, on being questioned, cannot remember much about the Italian; he cannot be sure whether or not he had a child with him,—all that he is sure of is the monkey; he can most positively assert the presence of the monkey.

Captain Lovel, looking ten years older, goes sadly home to break the terrible news to his wife. He seems stunned with grief and horror that their darling little Ted, who has never done an unkindly act in all his sweet little life, had been *stolen*,—almost in sight of their very eyes, had been spirited away.

It was a terrible time for the Lovels. Poor father and desolate mother! their cross seemed more than they could bear. Poor Marjorie, after days and nights of intense, but suppressed grieving,—for, with sweet thoughtfulness, she tried not to let mamma and papa hear her heart-broken sobs, her cries for the dear little brother,—fell ill, and needed her mother's entire attention.

Captain Lovel meanwhile was pursuing one vain clue after another. The Italian had been arrested at Cheyenne, but it had proved an easy matter for

him to establish his innocence; of course, he said nothing of the exchange which had taken place, in which his friend had gone *east*, with a child, and he, with the monkey and organ, had continued *west*.

Tesso had been too smart to buy his railroad ticket at the station, well knowing that his foreign appearance would excite curiosity, and cause him to be remembered in case he was wanted. So, with Teddy in his arms, he had simply boarded the train, where, amongst the crowded emigrant car, his identity as an Italian organ-grinder was soon lost sight of.

As for the child, the busy conductor never noticed the bundle done up in an old red shawl, so that when closely questioned afterwards as to the passengers he had carried on his "run," he asserted most positively that no Italian, with a beautiful, golden-haired boy, could possibly have escaped his notice; and right here was lost the faintest chance of tracing the missing child, for Captain Lovel,—and the detectives agreed with him,—thought the child had been taken to San Francisco.

Photographs and a full account of the child's kidnapping had appeared in every town of any size in the Union. The description of Teddy's appearance

was very accurate, but, of course, his curious transformation was never dreamed of.

Captain Lovel's father, who was a man of wealth, had offered a reward of five thousand dollars for the safe return of the child. But all to no purpose. Teddy Lovel seemed to have utterly vanished.

The suspense was horrible, unbearable. Captain Lovel groaned: "Any certainty were better."

Opinion in the garrison during this time of anguish was divided as to how Mrs. Lovel bore her crushing blow. Some thought her patient resignation saint-like, while others said she seemed cold and heartless, her grief was so different from her husband's.

God alone knew the secret of her tortured soul. To Him and to His Mother, "Comforter of the Afflicted," did she reveal the anguish which consumed her.

"My Jesus!" she prayed, "if it be possible, spare me this bitter chalice; yet, not my will, but Thine, dear Lord. Mary, my Mother! to thy tender care do I commit my little one. Pray for him! Save him!"

At night Marjorie, kneeling beside the empty cot, prayed in her childish treble:

"Dear Jesus! take care of little brother, and bring him safe home to us."

Then Mrs. Lovel, with such a heart-broken look of sorrow, would quickly, but quietly leave the room, while mammy, the old black nurse, who had cared for the children since their babyhood, would murmur, with tearful eyes :

"God Almighty ! bress de chile. Mis' Lovel's a saint, she is ; but she ain't long for dis year worl', ole mammy's thinking, if de good Lord don't restoah de lost lamb."

* * * * *

Slowly the long, cruel weeks crept into months, bringing with them no clue, no hint as to Teddy's fate.

Captain Lovel's black hair was thickly threaded with gray ; his face looked old and worn ; his gay, debonair manner seemed gone forever.

Mrs. Lovel had lost all her pretty color, her girlish looks, her merry, tender little ways. Grief and suspense were slowly but surely killing her. The kindly old doctor shook his head gravely over her daily increasing delicacy, and ordered an entire change of scene and climate.

That night, when Captain Lovel told her of the doctor's decision, she remained longer than usual absorbed in prayer, with such a look of tender ex-

altation on her sweet face that her husband regarded her with most tender awe.

Suddenly a light seemed to break over her pale, worn face, and she exclaimed, rapturously :

"Oh, John ! dear husband, I feel that God has answered my prayers. Our darling is *alive*; he is well. We shall find him at Chicago, I know. I am sure of it. Our Blessed Mother has guarded our treasure, our little ewe lamb. She has *promised* me that we shall find him. Oh, Teddy ! my baby, my little son, our Blessed Mother will find you !" she cried, brokenly, yet so confidently that her husband said, solemnly :

"Mary, would that I had your faith ; pray for me, dear wife. God grant that you are right."

PART III.

It was midnight before Teddy awakened from his unnatural sleep. So confused and dazed and thoroughly frightened to find himself on a rapidly-moving train, he cried out :

"Mamma ! I want you, mamma !"

In an instant a hand clutched his little arm, while a fierce voice whispered in his ear :

"*Hush!* If you speak, if you make any noise, I will *kill* you! Drink this," and a spoonful of some nauseous drug was forced through the quivering lips.

Teddy remembered nothing more until, sick and faint, he was thoroughly and finally aroused by the stir and bustle of a big station as their train rolled into the Union Depot at Chicago.

Teddy's trembling legs refused to bear him; so, with a muttered oath, the Italian flung his bundle over his shoulder and carried the child in his arms. They walked what seemed a long distance to the sick, tired boy, but was only a few blocks in reality. Stopping in front of a huge, tumble-down looking tenement, which stood in the centre of the most disreputable part of the Italian quarter, Teddy's captor gave three slow knocks, followed by a peculiar whistle, evidently a signal, for on their conclusion the door swung open.

At the head of the stairs stood a woman, whose head was closely muffled in a red shawl. She started on seeing the man and his little companion; then, in shrill, angry tones, began a rapid conversation in Italian.

Her loud, angry remonstrance brought to the open door a pretty little girl of about twelve, who looked out with great curiosity, then exclaimed :

“Oh ! is it you, Tesso ? And whom have you brought back ? ”

Her only reply was a violent push from the angry woman, which sent her reeling into the room, when the door was slammed and the key on the outside turned quickly.

Teddy, only half conscious from his weakness and fright,—he had hardly eaten for two days,—was glad when, up another long flight of stairs, they got beyond the sound of that terrible voice, and presently he was carried into a small back room and flung roughly on a hard little cot that stood in the corner.

For three weeks the child was not allowed to leave that room, save after dark, when his cruel master, as he had been taught to call his captor, would take him out for necessary exercise.

He had been told that if he spoke one word of English, or addressed anyone, he would be instantly killed. The cruel treatment, the beatings, the fearful cursings Teddy had already received made his belief

in this threat implicit. He was thoroughly cowed and submissive to the commands of his abductor.

The three weeks had been spent in teaching the child to sing, to the accompaniment of the harp, a few sweet, simple Italian airs. He had also learned to answer and ask a few questions in that language, so that, with a few set begging phrases, such as "Kind lady, help us," "Good sir, help my poor father," wicked Tesso felt that the boy's ignorance of his supposed native tongue would not betray him.

Then commenced for the sensitive, high-minded little fellow a life of torture. He felt sometimes as if it couldn't be true,—as if it must be some terrible dream, from which he would waken by hearing Marjorie call, "Wake up, Ted; wake up."

At first Tesso had feared the child would die on his hands, his grief was so intense; nothing, neither threats nor beatings, had had any effect upon him. But one day the Italian, in despair, had promised Teddy that if he would stop grieving, learn his little songs and do exactly as he was bid, in a year he might go home.

This ruse succeeded well; it brought life back to the big, despairing brown eyes, and a faint color

beneath the olive-stained cheeks; he went at his lessons with such good will, that he soon had quite a stock of little songs.

It was not the singing that Teddy objected to so much, for he would throw back his head, open his little mouth, and pour forth such a sweet gush of melody that 'staid old business men would pause to listen to the little Italian girl, and dimes and quarters actually flowed in upon them; no, it was not the singing, but the having to pass around the battered red velvet hat and say, pleadingly: "Help us, kind sir," or "lady," as the case might be, while Tesso, the wicked old hypocrite, would shiver and shake with a pretended hollow cough, at the same time twanging out a pathetic air of "Sweet Italy."

The combination was very effective,—the big pleading eyes of the supposed little Italian girl and the consumptive cough of the father; dimes and quarters were always forthcoming, and sometimes even big silver pieces.

Teddy had one staunch friend and ally in the little girl who had peeped out at him the morning of his arrival.

Bianca was a flower girl in the season, and sold matches, newspapers, or anything else that came handy, when the weather was too cold for her posies; she lived with the cross old woman on the floor beneath Teddy.

In her way, Bianca tried hard to be a good girl; she had very tender recollections of a beautiful young mother, who had taught her her prayers and sung, in a low, sweet voice, beautiful hymns; and her father, too, she remembered,—such a strong, handsome father, with a laugh and a pleasant word for everyone. Then had come a dreadful time, which Bianca never thought of without a shudder. A malignant fever broke out in the overcrowded tenement, and both her young mother and father were amongst the first victims, and she had gone to live with cross Anita and ever since had had to work hard for her.

Bianca had been very curious about Teddy from the first; she had never had any little brothers or sisters of her own, and at the first glimpse of the beautiful, pale child in Tesso's arms, she had loved him.

She both hated and feared Tesso, however ; so, when her friendly advances towards his new charge were rudely repulsed, nothing daunted, she determined to gain her object secretly,—to look, see and talk with this pale, heart-broken little girl, “who is not Italian one bit,” said shrewd Bianca.

Before long an evening came when Tesso happened to go out. Bianca had heard Teddy talking or, perhaps, praying in *English* ; I am afraid she must have applied her little pink ear to the keyhole to have heard this ; still, her bringing up, or rather lack of it, may excuse her ; I am sure Teddy did when she confessed her fault to him a few moments later.

She could stand it no longer. Those terrible sobs were too much for Bianca's warm, loving heart ; she determined to go in and comfort the desolate child if Tesso did find her there and beat her.

“Little one,” she called, softly, “open the door and let me in.”

The sobs ceased. “Who are you ? I can't. Tesso has locked me in and taken the key,” replied a little voice in *English* ; then, as if suddenly remembering a hardly learned lesson, in a frightened tone the

voice said: "Oh! I *didn't* mean to speak English; please don't tell on me."

"Of course I will not," returned Bianca, in fluent English, which she spoke quite as well as her native tongue. "Poor baby! have courage; I will manage. Do not cry any more," and Teddy heard her footsteps flying down the stairs.

Presently she was back with a big bunch of keys, and, after trying each one, found one that would open the door to Teddy's prison.

What a delight that stolen visit was to Teddy! Bianca sat down on the bare wooden floor and cuddled the desolate child in her loving arms.

"Tell me, little one, what is the trouble? Why do you cry, cry all day?"

"Oh, I cannot! I dare not!" replied the boy, with a shudder; the very thought of telling his secret made him imagine Tesso advancing upon him with a terrible knife ready to kill him.

"There is some mystery here," muttered the girl, thoughtfully. "I know Tesso is wicked enough for anything. Patience; we shall see. What is your name, little one?" she asked.

"Tesso says I am *Nina*," replied the child, wearily.

"And what relative is Tesso?" questioned the girl; "your uncle? your cousin?"

"Oh, I must not! I dare not tell you! Please do not ask me!" cried the child.

"There, there, poor little one; never mind. Bianca will not trouble thee with questions again," said the girl, soothingly. "I will just find out Tesso's secret myself," she said to herself. "Tesso is the master,—the Padrone, as we say; that is best, is it not, Nina?"

"Yes, yes, Bianca!" exclaimed the little fellow, eagerly. "I call Tesso Padrone; he is *not* my papa, you know."

"Yes, Nina," returned the girl, dryly; "I am *very* sure he is not your papa. Your papa and mamma, little one, they are not dead, are they?" she asked, suddenly.

"Oh, no, no!" cried Teddy, vehemently. "I shall go home to them in a year, Tesso says, if I am good and earn lots and lots of money. Is a year *very* long, Bianca?" he asked, wistfully.

"Ah! no; not when one has friends, plenty to eat, and a little to spend on feast days," Bianca answered, cheerily. "I will be your friend, Nina; is it not so? We will have many pleasant days

together ; we two together, we will fool old Tesso. Ha, ha !” and she laughed merrily ; “ see, he thinks he has the little bird safely caged, but Bianca knows a thing or two,” and she shook her bunch of keys gayly, while Teddy’s poor little pale face brightened up with an answering smile.

“ To-morrow now, Nina, at Father Pietro’s church, Santa Maria, we are going to crown our Blessed Lady. The lights, the flowers and the music ! Oh, it will be lovely ! We will go,” she said, decisively. “ Ah ! but I forget,” she added, sorrowfully. “ You are American ; you are not Catholic ; you do not know, you do not love our Blessed Lady.”

“ Oh, but I *do* love her, Bianca !” responded the child, eagerly. “ Mamma and Marjorie and I are Catholics. I ask our dear Mother in Heaven every night to send my own mamma to me.”

Warm-hearted Bianca threw both arms around the child’s neck, and exclaimed :

“ We will both go and ask Blessed Mother to help you, and, Nina, I will bring a few of my prettiest flowers and we will lay them at her feet. But see, it is late. I must go, so that old Tesso will not find out. Cheer up, little one ; do not cry,

and I will come for you to-morrow evening as soon as old Tesso goes off to the café."

"Good-bye, Bianca. I will not cry any more. Good-night, and God bless you and our Holy Mother keep you," repeating the little formula with which he, mamma and Marjorie parted for the night.

"The same to you, little one," and Bianca noiselessly unlocked the door and went softly up the stairs, reaching, unnoticed, her own room.

PART IV.

Those months of dreadful suspense, in which nothing, not even the faintest clue, as to Teddy's probable fate was learned, dragged slowly along. It had been a sad summer for the entire garrison, that Teddy, the sweetest, gayest, bonniest little lad of them all, should be, perhaps, dying of neglect and starvation. Oh! it was an appalling thought—one that made the mothers clasp closer their own darlings, and thank God for their safety.

Captain Lovel had never been seen to smile once since the day the child was stolen, while Mrs. Lovel seemed to be slowly fading away before their eyes. Every pleasant evening she and Marjorie carried

offerings of sweet flowers to the little old gray-stone chapel, where, above the rudely-fashioned altar, hung an exquisite painting of the Sacred Heart. There the mother and little daughter remained absorbed in supplications for the recovery of their lost darling, until the loud notes of the bugles and the evening gun warned them of the coming night.

One and all felt the same way: if Teddy had been taken from them by death, they could have borne it better. If their loving hands had prepared the child for his last sleep, had smoothed with tender care those tangled golden curls, they would have been content; if they had been able to strew his little grave with the old-fashioned, sweet-smelling flowers the child had loved so well, they would almost have been happy, for they would have known he was at rest, and safe with Him who said: "Suffer little children to come unto Me, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven."

* * * * *

Mrs. Lovel and Marjorie were returning from their evening visit to the chapel, the child singing softly to herself such a quaint, merry little air, with a dainty chorus such as the spring birds pipe out

when the buds swell and the crocuses peep out from their snug winter quarters.

"Bob-o-link, Bob ; pretty Bob White," sang the child, ending the refrain with a soft whistle, such as the quail or Bob White's call in early spring.

"Don't, Marjorie, don't!" cried Mrs. Lovel. "I cannot bear to hear it, dear. Little Ted's song."

"It is because I have been thinking of darling brother, mamma dear, all day, and of quite a wonderful idea that came to me while we were saying our prayers, that made me sing little Teddy's song. Mamma," she continued, earnestly, "no matter where we were, if we heard that song, we would know that Teddy was singing it, wouldn't we? And it would be the same way with him ; wherever he was, if he heard his song, he would know we were near and had come to save him."

Mrs. Lovel was at once aroused and excited over Marjorie's idea.

"Come, dear!" she exclaimed, "let us go and tell papa at once. There he is now, just returning from 'Retreat ;' call to him, Marjorie."

Instead of calling, the little girl gave a soft, clear whistle, the three notes of the Bob White's call.

The Captain heard and recognized the signal, for he started, and a momentary look of anguish came into his face, which he quickly suppressed as he hurried towards his wife, saying :

"The mail is just in, Mary, and my leave has come; now we must get away just as soon as mammy can pack us up. There is mammy now, Marjorie, evidently looking for you, so run along."

"You heard the child give Teddy's call; I saw you recognized it, John. She has an idea that we may find our darling by means of his song," said Mrs. Lovel. "You know, dear, I have always felt that Teddy was stolen on account of the use to which his extraordinary beauty and talent could be put. Tom Benton told me,—for I have made him go over that scene with that terrible man again and again, hoping in vain to obtain some hint, some clue as to why our boy was stolen,—that Teddy sang all his little songs and repeated them over and over to the man's great delight, for Tom heard him say, 'Well, little man, there is a fortune in that small throat of yours.' It is this phrase, this idea that has haunted me all along. Strange to say, Teddy did not sing his Bird Song. I say strange,

dear, for if you remember, the simple little air, with its childish words, that I composed myself, was Teddy's favorite."

"Yes, dear; I know. I have only to close my eyes to see the little man and hear his sweet voice," replied the Captain. "You know the men in the Company named him 'Bob White' because that call was so constantly on his lips," he finished, sadly.

"What more probable, John," continued Mrs. Lovel, "than Teddy's cruel task-master should have taken him, disguised, of course, to the big Fair; all the world is rushing there; nowhere else could the child earn so much for his cruel captors. I cannot explain to you my feeling, my almost certain hope that we shall find our darling in Chicago."

* * * * *

Mammy did wonders in the packing-up line; she refused to allow "Miss Mary," as she called Mrs. Lovel, to help at all. But Marjorie's willing hands and feet were pressed into service.

Mammy even forgot her customary weekly attack of the "misery," until reminded of it by Marjorie, when the old woman calmly remarked:

"Law sakes, chile! mammy *ain't* got de time to enjoy de misery *now*. Mus' wait till our trabels is done ober."

"Mammy, why are you packing up Teddy's things?" exclaimed Marjorie one morning, her blue eyes filling with sudden tears at the sight of the jaunty little blue sailor suits, the stout, boyish shoes and other necessities.

"Hush, chile!" whispered old mammy, warningly; "doan' you tell your maw, but when de bressed lamb is found, his mammy's gwine to be ready for him," she concluded, triumphantly and solemnly.

"You're sure, mammy, are you, that we shall find him?" inquired Marjorie, much impressed.

"Shuah, chile? In cose I's shuah. Ain't Miss Mary been a talkin' wid de angels and de saints? She's done got de look of Heaven in her sweet face. De Lord's gwine to ansah her pra'r shuah; we's a gwine to fine our bressed lamb, or we's gwine to larn dat he's safe in de ahms of de Lord Jesus," concluded the old nurse, reverently.

"Stope dat cryin', chile!" commanded mammy, sternly, the tears running unchecked and unheeded

down her fat, black cheeks; "you know de doctor done say we is to cheer Miss Mary up. S'pose your maw came in now and see you *sniffing* like *dat*," and in another moment she had gathered the forlorn little figure in her strong, loving arms, and was soothing Marjorie as she would a little baby.

Only when the deep, gasping sobs were changed into the regular breathings of sleep did mammy lay her tender burden gently down, when she attacked the pile of trunks before her with renewed energy, for they were to start east to-morrow and there was still many things to be done.

* * * * *

The first week of October found the Lovels, with Marjorie and mammy, too, comfortably installed in one of the huge hotels, built for convenience sake, near the big "White City."

Already the little excitement incident to their journey, the novelty and entire change of scene had greatly benefited Mrs. Lovel. She seemed imbued with almost supernatural strength and inspired with a feverish energy, which would not allow her to remain inactive any length of time.

Every spare moment was spent in wandering through the huge Fair buildings; but the mother's eyes passed by without heeding or seeing the marvellous creations of man's genius and industry; they were fastened with pathetic eagerness on the vast shifting crowds of people, seeking in vain for a beloved little face with laughing brown eyes and crowned with a mass of tangled golden curls.

PART V.

Teddy thought the next day would never pass, so slowly did the hours seem to crawl along. He practised all his little songs so hard and so well as to even elicit a grumbling word of approval from Tesso.

"Very well done! Bravo, bravo, Nina!" he called, for even in private he insisted upon the new name, so that the child should become thoroughly accustomed to the use of it. "Soon, very soon now, we will try our little songs at the big Fair; there are so many strangers there—rich, ah! so rich; we will make plenty, plenty money there. If Nina is good, makes no trouble, no cry, speak Italian always, never one word of de Engleese, perhaps he may go

home sooner, much sooner than one year; who knows? We will see."

The cruel, crafty man well knew how to best work upon the child's feelings, so as to get the best work from him.

Teddy clapped his hands, exclaiming: "I will be good, Tesso! I will do as you say! You will see I will sing my very best, and make lots and lots of money for you!"

* * * * *

When evening came, Teddy pretended to go to bed as usual, but as soon as he heard Tesso lock him in, and the sound of his heavy footsteps had entirely ceased, he was up and dressed in a twinkling, waiting for Bianca to liberate him.

The children felt very safe in venturing out to church, for that was the last place in which they would find Tesso. Bianca knew his nightly habits well; his evenings were spent at a dingy little café, where, with his compatriots, men as wicked as himself, he played cards and drank far more wine than was good for him.

"Hist!" came a whisper from the keyhole; noiselessly the door swung open, and Bianca, smiling

gayly, stood there, dressed all in white and with two bunches of flowers.

"Oh, Bianca! how lovely you look!" exclaimed Teddy; "and what beautiful flowers! Are they for our Blessed Mother?"

"Yes, little one; you and I will lay them at her feet, and beg her to send your own mamma to you. But come, Nina, we must hurry, for the procession is to start promptly at eight; and see what I have brought you," proudly displaying a pretty white veil and wreath, and white muslin dress. "It is necessary that we have these, if we wish to walk in the procession. This," touching with reverent fingers her own poor white cotton gown, "was my First Communion dress, and my veil and wreath, too. I have brought you the dress of old Maria's little Toinette; she died two weeks after she had made her Holy Communion, but old Maria said you should wear them, for you had a face like an angel and you would surely pray for her. Maria is a bad old woman, certainly, but she did love that little Toinette."

"Oh, thank you, Bianca!" cried Teddy, happily; "you're dest awful good to me. I will thank old

Maria, too, and ask Our Lady to make her good. It must be drefful to be old and bad, too. Mammy is real old—most a hundred years old, I think, but she is awful good. She was a 'shoutin' Mefodist' once upon a time, but she told Marjorie and me that Miss Mary—that's my dear mamma, you know—had made her a Catholic."

"Come now, we will go, Nina," said Bianca, who meanwhile had pinned wreath and veil on the dark curls. "You have spoken of Marjorie before, little one; who is she? And this—this mammy—is that how you call it?—who is she?" said the girl, curiously, for she hoped by encouraging the child to chatter she might obtain some clue as to his home and relatives. For that he had been stolen she did not doubt now; in fact, she had never believed Tesso's story about the little stranger. She had felt that this beautiful, high-bred looking little English girl was no more Tesso's niece than she was, for this was the story given out by the Italian to the lodgers in the tenement house to account for Teddy's sudden appearance amongst them.

Perhaps none of them were one whit more credulous than Bianca had been; still, they were all people

who minded their own business and asked no inconvenient questions, only asking a like leniency in regard to their own actions.

As the children approached the church, they found that the throngs of people had overflowed into the street; but Bianca, seizing Teddy firmly by the arm, hurried him to the side door of the sacristy, where the sweet-faced, patient Sisters were trying to bring a little order into the seeming chaos.

The ceremony of the coronation of the Queen of Heaven was one of the greatest festivals of the whole year at the church of Santa Maria, coming next to the sacred feast of Corpus Christi itself in the hearts of the people.

The energetic, hard-working priests had introduced this beautiful and touching ceremony as a fitting conclusion to the May devotions. It was a beautiful idea, and gave an added warmth and brightness to the warm love those poor children of the teeming tenement houses bore towards "Mary, the Mother of Jesus," she who had never failed to hear their cries for help. If only for one night, it lifted them above their sordid lives, giving them a glimpse of what seemed like heaven itself.

Nothing was lacking in preparation to do honor to their Queen. Boys and girls had been carefully trained in singing by the good Sisters; the church was most gorgeously adorned; the altars were ablaze with myriad lights, and beautified with fragrant roses and St. Joseph lilies, while scarlet carnations gleamed in striking contrast between them.

All eyes were turned on the sanctuary, where the throne of the Immaculate Virgin had been erected. It was covered with exquisite white flowers and a network of delicate vines and ferns, in which swung a score of tiny, flickering fairy lights.

High above the congregation, and outlined in clear view by the candles of the main altar behind, was the great statue of the Virgin, sculptured from the purest white marble, holding in her arms the Divine Infant.

The low, sweet tones of the organ heralded the beginning of the festival. The doors of the vestry swung slowly open, and the procession of children entered for the march around the church.

Up and down the aisles they passed, singing, in their sweet, childish treble, the Litany of the Blessed Virgin, the boyish voices chanting loud and

strong the response—"Ora pro nobis." Then the gates of the sanctuary slid back, and the boys and girls went in to deposit their offerings of flowers at the feet of their Mother and Queen.

The column of boys and girls was led by a young acolyte bearing an exquisite banner, attended by two little knights, robed in blue and white. They made way for a hundred little girls, robed in white, with veils and wreaths of roses and bearing the Virgin's color—blue.

It was amongst these girls that Teddy and Bianca marched ; not together, for they were not near the same size. Teddy's little heart was full to overflowing. How tenderly the Blessed Mother seemed to smile on him ; heaven was not so very far away ; surely she would hear his little prayer as he laid his bunch of flowers at her feet. "Dear Mother, pray for Teddy and help him to get home," whispered the child, then joined the other children who knelt within the sanctuary awaiting the approach of the lovely young girl who had been chosen to place the crown of roses on the Blessed Virgin's head.

The boys, meantime, sang the coronation hymn, the chorus of which rang out sweet, strong and clear :

"We crown thee with blossoms so fragrant and gay,
Queen of the Angels and Queen of the May."

Down the main aisle comes the young girl, attended by two tiny pages in blue, who carried the floral crown. Behind them walked the little Grand Marshal, arrayed in all the glory of military trappings, wearing, as a loyal little knight should, his Lady's colors in his gorgeous blue and white uniform, with plumed helmet, epaulets, sash and glittering tiny sword.

The music ceased for a moment, when the fair young maid of honor stepped behind the throne and placed on the head of the Queen of Heaven, the crown of roses ; the coronation completed, the young voices burst forth into the beautiful melody of the "Salve Regina."

The hymn, Latin words and all, was perfectly familiar to Teddy, for they sung it every Sunday evening in that dear home which seemed so far, far away—it was papa's favorite hymn.

Clear and sweet the child sung the dear familiar words ; higher and higher soared the young voice, until the children near him ceased singing entirely, lost in wonder at this little stranger who sang like

an angel, and looked one, too, with his pale, beautiful face upturned in a very ecstasy of devotion.

The black robed Nuns in their distant pews heard the new voice and wondered, and good Father Pietro, from his seat in the sanctuary, wiped the tears from his eyes and asked God to bless the sweet young singer. Bianca heard it, too, and only for a moment was she in doubt as to whose was this marvellous voice.

"It is Nina, the poor little one; she sings like the bright angels themselves. Oh, Jesus and Mary! show me what to do for her," she prayed fervently.

* * * * *

The old tenement house looked gloomier and more forbidding than ever to the two children after this brief glimpse of heaven.

"Oh, Nina! how beautifully you sang," cried Bianca, "and how lovely it all was; surely our dear Mother will be pleased with her children to-night."

"If I could be Our Lady's little knight like that boy we saw, I would be *perfectly* happy; that is, of course, if I was at home again; nothing will ever make me happy here."

"Why, how funny, Nina, that you should want to be a boy!" cried Bianca, laughing softly.

"Oh, I am—that is—you do not understand, Bianca!" cried Teddy, confused.

"No, little one, I certainly do not; but one thing I know—I must hurry and get you safe home; we must take no chance of being discovered, for that would be an end to all our fine plans."

PART VI.

A few days after the May procession Tesso announced one morning that he thought they might try their luck at the big Fair. Teddy had become quite an experienced little street-singer by this time, for after a hurried breakfast of coffee and rolls, with perhaps an egg for Sundays, Tesso would shoulder his battered old harp, Teddy would don the tawdry red velvet cap with dingy imitation Roman coins, and off they would start for the day's work.

Spending the mornings down in the shopping centre, near the big dry goods shops, they would take up their stand, and Teddy's sweet voice and winning manners rarely failed to bring in a rich harvest of small silver.

But Tesso had grown ambitious. He felt if they could do so well in the bustling city, where, after all, people were too busy to really stop and listen to the child's singing, how much better they would do amongst the leisurely crowd of rich strangers who thronged the big Fair. Heretofore a latent half-defined fear had caused the man to restrain his ambition, and content himself with "working" the streets where he and the child were safe from recognition. At the Fair it was different; with people from all over the country, with the *soldiers* on guard there (Tesso was desperately afraid of these soldiers), the child might betray him; would, certainly, if he got the chance. But Tesso determined to take every precaution against this; he had only to work upon the child's fears to prevent it. He had absolutely no fears of anyone recognizing Teddy Lovel, the stolen boy, in this pretty little child of the south, with her olive skin and soft, dark eyes, with curling locks to match.

Their earnings at the close of the first day's work at the Fair far exceeded Tesso's wildest hopes. He smiled and chuckled to himself over the success of his plan; with the money pouring in at this rate, he

would soon be able to return to his beloved Italy with a snug bank account, sufficient to maintain him in comfortable idleness for the rest of his life.

Teddy had behaved well, had sung splendidly, had not even tried to leave his side, even when in the jam of people they had gotten into once would have made it easy.

There was just one thing troubling Tesso at present, and that was Father Pietro. Teddy's voice the night of the May procession had so impressed the good priest that he had hurried out to find the little stranger who sang so divinely, only to find the child had disappeared; he learned, however, that the stranger had come with Bianca Martelli, who lived in the big Italian tenement.

So, bright and early the very next morning, Father Pietro started out to look up the new discovery. Early as it was, Tesso and the child had left for their daily work; but Bianca was busy on the dirty front steps arranging, with admirable taste, her great tray of flowers.

The Father, recognizing the child as belonging to his Sunday-school, stopped to pat her head and chat with her a moment.

"Where is your little companion, my child—the one that sang so sweetly at our festival last evening? She is a stranger here; is it not so? Has she father and mother?"

"It is little Nina you mean, of course, Reverend Father," answered Bianca. "Does she not sing beautifully?—like the angels, I say. It was on account of the heavenly voice and face that old Maria loaned me her little dead Toinette's First Communion things."

"Old Maria must have a kind heart," responded the priest.

"Oh, certainly, Reverend Father; she has a few good points, though she is a wicked woman."

"Child, child! let not thy tongue run away with thee." But the good priest sighed as he spoke; his flock was large, and none knew so well as he the vice and sins of that teeming population.

"How I wish Nina was here for you to see, Father Pietro," said Bianca; then, lowering her voice cautiously, she added: "There is some secret about Nina, Reverend Father. She came suddenly, quite early one morning, about a month ago, with Tesso Passi, the Padrone, you know, Father. Tesso

gave out that the little Nina was his orphan niece, his sister's child, whom he had just been to bury. It is all a lie, Father," she said, with all the frankness of a child of the streets. "I never did believe it; but now Nina has spoken to me of her home, of a father and mother, a sister and an old black nurse she calls mammy. It is my belief, Reverend Father, there is something very wrong there."

"Child, you must not imagine too much," said the priest, smiling kindly, but looking a little grave. "I will call in the evening and see Passi myself," which he did; but Tesso told a very straightforward story: the child was his niece, his poor sister's child. Poor Marta! she had been widowed a year ago, and now he, Tesso, has just returned from burying her.

"Would the Reverend Father care to question little Nina?"

But the priest got very little satisfaction out of this, for Tesso stood where he could cast fierce, threatening glances at Teddy, and the child was so dazed and frightened he hardly knew what to answer, save when the priest asked if Nina would not like to attend the Sisters' night school and learn to sing. The child gave a pleased look, and Tesso, too, had

to look delighted, though he was inwardly raging at what he termed the meddlesome conduct of the priest.

Nina was dismissed, and it was only when Father Pietro was taking his leave that he remembered to ask :

"And what has become of Nina's little sister that she speaks of?"

"Oh, Reverend Sir! my brother in St. Louis has the little one. It was a pity to separate them, I know; but we do our best. We are poor, you know."

The lies had come so glibly, that the good priest was entirely duped. Perhaps if Bianca had trusted him entirely with her reasons for suspicions, matters would have been different; but as it was, Father Pietro left with the conviction that Passi was rather a good man all the while, and resolving to scold little Bianca next time he saw her for her too vivid imagination.

"How would he know that the boy has a sister," Tesso was muttering angrily to himself, "when I do not know it myself?" Thereupon he put Teddy through a savage cross-questioning.

Had he ever spoken to the priest? Had he ever told him about his home? Fortunately, he had no

suspicious of Teddy's friendship with Bianca ; the girl had managed well ; so the child could answer truthfully that he had never spoken to the priest, that he had never even seen him before.

It was unfortunate that a few days after his visit to Tesso, Father Pietro should have gone on a long expected and well-earned vacation to his beloved Italy. He did not forget Tesso and Nina, however, for he asked one of his assistant priests to visit them and ask Tesso to allow the child to join the children's choir class.

The priest's request was met with a sullen refusal ; the girl had quite enough singing during the day, Tesso declared, and, as there was a good deal of reason in this, the priest could say nothing.

Bianca, seeing that her first efforts to solve the mystery surrounding the child resulted in nothing, gave up the attempt, contenting herself with seeing as much of the little girl as possible. Every warm evening found the two children sitting on the stone steps of the old church of the Santa Maria ; and, though Bianca again and again tried to induce Teddy to speak of his home, he refused to be drawn out, always saying :

"I dare not tell; I am afraid. But I am going home in a year, if our Blessed Mother does not send dear mamma before."

Slowly the days crept into weeks and the weeks into months. All during the long, hot summer, Tesso and Teddy had not failed to visit the Fair every day. The child got to know by heart the great white buildings; and he had seen a great deal of their contents, too, for Tesso was of a curious, inquiring turn of mind, and enjoyed the sight-seeing; so, during the luncheon hour, when business was slack, the two would wander along hand in hand.

* * * * *

It was a beautiful, bright morning in October as Tesso and Teddy started off for their usual day's work at the Fair. The former remarked, smilingly:

"We shall have good luck to-day, Nina. I dreamed of lucky numbers all night," for Tesso was as superstitious as he was ignorant.

Good luck, indeed, was coming, or rather help from above, in answer to the fervent petitions of a heart-broken mother; but it was not of a kind expected or desired by Tesso.

PART VII.

If the ever-present sorrow for little Ted had not accompanied old mammy and Marjorie in all their wanderings, they would have enjoyed themselves hugely.

The day after their arrival in Chicago, the old woman asked and obtained permission to take Marjorie and go down town shopping. As the cable cars ran from their hotel to the centre of the shopping district, Mrs. Lovel saw no objection.

The old darkey, with her ebony skin, her gay red turban skillfully arranged over her crisp, scant locks, just tinged with gray, her stout figure arrayed in her very best "alpacy" gown, which itself was enveloped in an immaculate white apron of huge dimensions—mammy's aprons were the pride of her heart, her one vanity—formed a striking but pleasing contrast to the fair patrician beauty of her little charge.

Mammy and Marjorie were quite overwhelmed with the attentions of the polite young men behind the counters, who vied with each other in their attempts to please and satisfy her fastidious taste.

The first thing that struck mammy's eye on entering the big dry goods shop, was a gorgeous pale

pink tea gown, trimmed with white cotton lace, price ten dollars, materials, of course, of the cheapest. Marjorie protested earnestly against this purchase, finally asking :

“Why, mammy, where could you wear it?”

“In my own apartments, chile,” answered the old woman, loftily.

“Of course, dear mammy,” answered the little girl, seeing she had offended, and yet not wishing mammy to make this ridiculous purchase, when a sudden inspiration seized her. “Oh, mammy! remember we are going to travel for six months, and by the time we get home it will be all out of style.”

This argument proved conclusive, and mammy's attention wandered next to a counter full of gaudy belts.

“Heah, Mar's, just lem me try some ir dem on!” exclaimed mammy.

But, alas! none could be found long enough to meet around the old woman's ample waist. Choosing the gayest one of the lot, mammy whispered to Marjorie :

“It'll fit right 'nough, chile, when I gets home and gets my corsets on.”

Marjorie, seeing that mammy felt hurt over the apparent slimness of Chicago ladies' waists, for she had heard her mutter to herself, "'Pears to me dis is jest a puttin' on airs; I's done seed plenty o' women a heap fatter'n I am," drew her attention to a quantity of brilliant red satin parasols, of the style known as "coaching," with great long, thick handles.

"Chile, you has mos' as good taste as youah maw. I always did say as how Miss Mary was de best dressed lady I knows."

After a long and serious discussion with Marjorie as to the relative merits of the different styles, mammy chose the very largest and reddest of them all; then, quite satisfied with her first day's shopping, she and Marjorie returned, weary but triumphant, to their hotel.

Captain and Mrs. Lovel had taken both Marjorie and mammy into their confidence, as regarded their hopes of finding the lost child at the great exhibition; and many a long and solemn discussion did the two have as to the best way of looking for little Teddy.

Organ-grinders were objects of constant suspicion to the old woman. She would follow one around,

and, when at last she had cornered the frightened man, she would pour such a torrent of questions, always ending up with some remarks about the police, the only portion of her discourse that made itself intelligible to her small audience, that the man would fairly break and run.

Day after day Captain and Mrs. Lovel pursued their search; but finally one morning came and Mrs. Lovel found herself quite unable to rise. Her husband insisted upon staying with her.

Mammy and Marjorie started as usual to see the sights. They had not seen the Children's Building as yet, and Marjorie proposed allowing herself to be checked, like they do our parcels at the railway stations, just for the fun of the thing.

It was a beautiful morning, the air filled with the soft haze of Indian summer; the big inland sea stretched before them as blue and placid as the Mediterranean itself.

It was not ten o'clock when the two found themselves near the entrance to the big house devoted especially to the wants and amusement of little people. Already the building was thronged with curious and interested spectators. Mammy and

Marjorie found themselves in the centre of the huge mass of people, all pushing, scolding and talking at once.

Suddenly the crowd made a sudden swerve to the right, and a sort of expectant hush came over them. At that instant a child's voice, as clear and sweet as a bird's, commenced to sing.

"Bob-o-link, Bob; pretty Bob White," sang the voice, to a gay little accompaniment on a harp, this refrain being instantly followed by a series of sweet, high notes, and soft whistling and imitation of the call of the quail, or Bob White, which set the little folks half wild with delight.

"Oh, sing it again; sing it again!" a hundred shrill little voices called.

The moment those sweet notes struck mammy's ear, she had stopped short as if paralyzed, while Marjorie was speechless from agitation; recovering herself, the old woman, whose jolly black face had turned to a dark, ghastly color, pushed fiercely through the crowd.

When she saw the little Italian girl standing beside the man with the harp, she paused as if stunned; but just then the child, in response to

repeated encores, commenced the quaint little ditty again. Mammy did not hesitate now; with one bound she had seized the wretched-looking foreigner, shattering the old harp as she did so, and commenced belaboring him fiercely with the bran new red satin parasol, meanwhile ejaculating, wildly :

"Oh, Teddy, my chile! doan youah be feared! Mammy's got you, my bressed lamb! Oh, thank de good Lord for dis day! Whar is de perlise? Why doan dey come?"

Meanwhile Marjorie had darted forward and clasped the little girl in the red gown and cap in her arms, sobbing and crying as if her heart would break.

"Oh, Teddy! I has missed you so! Oh, darling, darling! we've found you, we've found you! Kiss me, kiss me, Ted dear!"

The spectators, not comprehending the meaning of this curious scene, had not interfered. At that moment, however, a tall, stalwart young sergeant of the Columbian Guard made his way through the excited throng, demanding to know what the trouble was.

As soon as mammy caught sight of his face, she called out, triumphantly :

"De Lord am suttently on our side dis heah day. Sergeant Maloney, you knows me—Captain Lovel's nuss, what done come from Fort Yankton. Dis heah is de wicked devil what done stole little Ted dar."

Marjorie, too, had instantly recognized the young sergeant as a recently discharged soldier from her father's company.

"Sergeant, Sergeant!" she cried, "this little girl is Teddy. They've put girl's clothes on him and done something to his hair and face."

Teddy's fear of his cruel master was evidently overpowering, for, with a heart-rending cry, he rushed forward, and, seizing both the Sergeant's brawny hands, cried:

"Save me! save me! Oh, Sergeant, take me home!"

It did not take long to confine the pale, shivering wretch, Tesso Passi, in the city prison, there to await his trial on the serious charge of kidnapping.

The trial, which occurred a few weeks later, created a great sensation, and when, amidst the crowded court-room, the judge sentenced the man to twenty years at hard labor in the State Penitentiary, not a soul but thought Tesso had received

his just desert. So he vanished forever from Teddy's life.

Sergeant Maloney was greatly excited over this happy event, which had occurred during his tour of guard duty ; he asked and readily obtained permission from the Officer of the Guard, who himself was a personal friend of Captain Lovel's, to carry Teddy to the hotel.

It was a strange little procession that made its way to the hotel that morning. First came the tall young soldier, carefully and tenderly carrying the frail-looking child ; Marjorie walked alongside, holding on lovingly to the worn little shoes, sobbing hysterically all the time, while mammy brought up the rear with the remains of the once resplendent parasol. The old woman was weeping and praying as she walked, and calling out words of loving welcome to the fantastic little figure in Maloney's arms.

Captain Lovel saw the strangely-assorted little group approaching ; half divining what had happened, yet almost afraid to believe, he left the room noiselessly, and in another instant had his little son safe in his yearning arms.

Such a day as that was all too short for that gloriously happy reunion, there was so much to tell and so much to hear.

Mammy would not hear of Teddy's being taken to his mamma in his fantastic disguise. She went to work with hot water and soap, and soon restored the child to his natural fairness, when, in his natty sailor suit, with his little cap on one side of the crop of *black* curls (mammy had to give them up in despair; the dye defied her best of efforts), she declared him ready; it was only then that Captain Lovel broke the good news to his wife.

Hardly had her cry of rapture ceased, when Teddy, safe and well, was clasped to her heart. All the horrors and anguish of the past months were forgotten in the supreme joy of that moment.

* * * * *

When the child finished his sad little story, telling them all of Bianca's unwearied kindness to him, Captain and Mrs. Lovel decided at once that they must see the girl and thank her themselves; she also, what could be done for her.

Bianca was quite overcome with joy and amazement—joy that "little Nina" had found her parents.

and amazement that "little Nina" wasn't a girl at all, but a very active little boy.

Under Mrs. Lovel's gentle questioning, Bianca's sad story was soon learned.

"John!" cried Mrs. Lovel, "she must come home with us and be our little girl; perhaps in this way we may show our gratitude to Him who has so mercifully restored our darling."

And so it was arranged without any difficulty whatever, cross Anita being only too glad to get rid of the care of the orphan girl, while she named an ample sum as a requisite for the loss of the child's services.

* * * * *

The next morning Mrs. Lovel had a beautiful Votive Mass said at the church of the Santa Maria in thanksgiving for her little son's recovery. No one assisted at the Holy Sacrifice with more reverence and devotion than Captain Lovel, who announced his intention to put himself under instructions.

* * * * *

The whole of that happy summer was spent at Captain Lovel's father's beautiful country place on the Hudson. In the fall, when the Lovels returned

to their frontier station, Bianca was placed at Manhattan with the nuns of the Sacred Heart, where she still is, fast becoming a most charming and accomplished girl.

Not only old mammy, but a governess, too, accompanied the Lovels back to Fort Yankton, so that under the lynx-eyed scrutiny of so many "grown ups," the children will never have a chance for any more escapades or adventures, such as Teddy's trip to the Fair.

❧ A TERRIBLE LESSON. ❧

A TERRIBLE LESSON.

THE Colonel had issued the annual Fourth of July order, stating that there would be no work done in the garrison, save the "necessary guard and police * duty." The order concluded, as it never had before, forbidding the use of fireworks within the limits of the Post proper. At the same time, the Colonel, who was a kind old fellow, with a keen remembrance of his own boyish days and the delights of the glorious Fourth, sent around a circular to the various mammas, saying the children might shoot their fire-crackers and send off their fireworks out on the target range, where a sentry would be posted to see that they got into no mischief.

Every mamma in the Post felt very grateful to the Colonel for his kindly thoughtfulness, for, one and all, they secretly dreaded the Nation's holiday, with its invariable accompaniment of burned fingers

*The military word for cleaning.

and scorched trousers and gowns. The children, too, were pleased with the Colonel's plan; that is, with one exception. Rex Vinton grumbled and growled at their not being allowed to send off their fire-crackers on the big pleasant parade ground, where the big elms cast a refreshing shade all day long—very different from the bare, hot, dusty target range.

But the Colonel was right in his prohibition, for, the year before, an innocent-looking "sizzler," as the children called it, had set fire to the band-stand and burned it down.

"Such nonsense!" Rex had growled at the luncheon table. "To hear Colonel Perry talk, you would think us a regular set of babies. For my part, I think it is downright mean of him to send us out on that hot old target range. I'd just like to tell him so, too."

"There, Rex; that will do. Let me hear no more talk of that kind," said his father, sharply, while his mother looked distressed over her boy's disagreeable frame of mind. It was very unlike his usual sunny temper.

"I'se dot lots o' toepedors, Wex!" exclaimed three-year-old Ethel. "They're busters, too," she announced, gravely.

"Oh, little daughter! what a word for a young lady," laughed mamma; and, as Rex joined in, he forgot for a time his grievance. In fact, it did not recur to him until the next afternoon, when, after a glorious morning spent in making all the noise possible with the ordinary fire-crackers, the boys had thrown themselves beneath the scant shade of a tent-fly put up for their benefit, and Jack Nolan remarked:

"It's too beastly hot for anything. I say we save the rest of our fire-crackers until after 'Retreat.' It will be cool then."

"Fourth of July comes only once a year, and I hate to lose a minute of it," said Harry Palmer.

"And so do I," "and I," "and I," said the other boys.

"If it hadn't been for Colonel Perry's interference, we needn't have," answered Rex, gloomily. "We could have fired them all day long on the parade. It never gets too hot there."

"Yes, and burn up another band-stand," remarked Jack Nolan.

"Oh, get out! what nonsense. I guess we're old enough to take care of ourselves and look out for things," said Rex. "See here, fellows, if you've any

spunk, and will go in for it, we can outwit the Colonel easily. I have just thought of a splendid plan."

"What is it?" chorused all the boys, save Jack Nolan, who looked his disapproval of the plan, whatever it might be.

"Well, you know that hollow at the lower end of the parade, where those old brass cannon are? It's well out of sight from the officers' quarters and the Guard House, and too far off for the noise to give us away. It's always cool and shady there, the trees are so thick. What do you say, fellows? Will you go?"

The novelty and daring of Rex's plan was very attractive to the boys, and all of them, with the exception of Jack, agreed to it. They were to separate now, go home for a fresh supply of punk and fire-crackers, and meet in half an hour. Jack tried his best to dissuade them from carrying out their plan, but he did not succeed.

"You're too goody-good for us, Jack Nolan," sneered Rex. Surely his Guardian Angel must have been grieved at his wayward conduct. "I suppose you won't think it necessary to go and inform upon us, even if you're too much of a *coward* to join in our fun."

"Take that back, Rex Vinton, or I'll make you!" cried Jack, wrathfully, looking so fiercely determined, too, that Rex muttered out an apology. "I am neither a sneak nor a coward, and I won't be called one just because I don't choose to disobey orders," and Jack marched off, leaving the boys looking and feeling a little cheap, for Jack was an acknowledged leader and a universal favorite, and, that he so decidedly disapproved of their plan, threw rather a wet blanket over it. However, they hated to back out, now that they had determined upon their unlawful amusement; so they separated to carry out their idea and to get a new supply of fire-crackers.

* * * * *

Half an hour later, and the boys met as agreed; but Rex was very much provoked to find that his little sister had followed. Ethel was quite used to being sent home whenever the boys were going off on one of their delightful expeditions. She had been told so often that girls were only in the way, that this time, when, from Rex's mysterious manner, she had seen that the boys were up to something, she had followed them at a distance, taking good care not to be discovered.

"Oh, bother!" said Rex, crossly. "What shall we do? If we send Ethel home now, she'll cry and let out about our being here."

"Make her sit under that tree and watch us," suggested Harry, good-naturedly; "and, if she is good and promises not to tell on us, we'll give her a box of candy."

So it was decided. Ethel, with strict injunctions not to stir an inch, was seated on the root of the big old elm tree, and the boys soon forgot all about the little girl in their enjoyment of their forbidden fun.

Left to herself, Ethel soon began to wish herself safely at home. Her conscience began to prick, too, for she had slipped away from nurse to follow Rex. At first she sat with both fat little forefingers in her ears, for the constant pop, pop of the fire-crackers was anything but pleasant to her; but, as soon as she became used to the noise, and saw, too, that the boys were paying no attention to her, she decided to find some amusement. The ground was thickly studded with the fragrant, dainty little white flower that grows in the Western States called the "prairie star."

"I dess I'll pick lots and lots for Blessed Mother, an' I'll tell her I'se sorry I runned away from nurse," said the little one, thinking aloud in her baby fashion.

How it all happened, no one ever quite knew, for



the boys did not see it and Ethel was too thoroughly frightened to be able to remember anything about it. Suddenly a wild, terrible shriek aroused Rex, who looked up to see his little sister a mass of flames. The dainty pink gingham gown, the frilled white sun-bonnet, all were in a blaze.

That was a terrible moment for the boy. For an instant he was rendered motionless with horror, when, with a cry for help, he darted forward and clasped the terrified child, and began trying to beat out the flames with his hands.

The boys had just started to run to his assistance when, with a quick run and jump down the bank, came Jack, and, in a second, he had Ethel tightly wrapped in his blazer, and, rolling her in the long grass, the flames were soon smothered.

Close behind Jack came the Officer of the Day, Lieutenant Brown, who had been making a tour of the garrison to see that all was well. He had seen the little group of boys down in the hollow, and at once had suspected they were up to some mischief, and had come to find out.

Jack Nolan, on his way to the tennis courts, had seen that the boys were discovered, and had run on to try to warn them, and, fortunately, had gotten there just in time to save Ethel's life.

Tenderly lifting the injured child in his arms, Mr. Brown carried her home, while ordering the thoroughly frightened and subdued boys to follow him to the Colonel, to whom he made a full report of their disobedience and its almost fatal results.

"How did the accident happen, Rex?" asked the Colonel, gravely.

"I do not know, sir," replied the boy with a half sob, "but it must have been a burning fire-cracker."

"I imagine your hands have had the worst of it, for Mr. Brown tells me that, owing to Jack's timely arrival, little Ethel was hardly scorched. Disobedience is a very serious offence, and one that I cannot suffer to go unpunished in my command. All of you go to your quarters at once, and remain there until I give you permission to leave. Mr. Brown will see that my orders are carried out."

"Yes, sir," replied the young officer, saluting and marching the boys off home.

Rex truly had had a terrible lesson, for it had nearly cost him his little sister's life; but he learned in that one dreadful instant, when he thought Ethel would burn to death before his eyes, the duty of obedience.

❧ SERGEANT ALLAN'S TRIAL. ❧

SERGEANT ALLAN'S TRIAL.

THE accused, a tall, broad-shouldered, soldierly-looking young fellow, with sergeant's stripes, stood quietly facing the array of gold lace and brass-buttoned rank, which was trying him by General Court-Martial for an offence against military discipline which in time of war would have merited *death*, and which, even as it was, if he were found guilty, would disgrace him forever in the eyes of his officers and his own comrades.

The charge was: "Violation of the 62nd Article of War Specification. In this, that he, Sergeant Philip Allan, Company G, 40th Regiment of Infantry, was found drunk or asleep on duty. This at Fort Warren, S. D., on the day of July 20th."

The court had been in session all morning, only adjourning long enough for luncheon, and was now hurrying to finish before three o'clock, after which hour no military court may legally exist. The

Judge-Advocate had read the charges and called up the few witnesses needed to prove that Sergeant Philip Allan, acting as Sergeant of the Guard on Wednesday, July 20th, at Fort Warren, South Dakota, had undoubtedly been found by Lieutenant Morris, Officer of the Day, on the Guard-House porch in a heavy sleep or stupor, induced, it was believed, by *intoxication*.

During this time, and while the sentry (there being only one man on guard at a time this day) was absent patrolling the Reservation, convict Low, awaiting transportation to the military prison at Fort Leavenworth, had effected his escape, and was still at large, although every effort had been made for his recapture.

Sergeant Allan's bronzed young face had flushed hotly many times during that long and trying day; but when he heard the charge of intoxication, his blue eyes flashed fire, his muscular frame heaved with angry emotion; but at the peremptory motion and warning look from Lieutenant Darrow, who was acting as his counsel, he restrained himself and soon regained his soldierly self-control.

Things were looking very black for Philip Allan; and so much was at stake, too. The boy (he was

not twenty-one, and with his smooth face, guiltless of beard or moustache, looked even younger), as every officer in the court well knew, had enlisted to try for a commission in the army. "He was the only son of his mother, and she was a widow." I doubt if there was a single heart in the court-room that day to whom those touching and expressive words from the Gospel of St. Luke had not appealed. He had done so well, too, before that fatal day, performing his military duties in a manner that elicited the admiration and respect of every man in the Regiment, from the genial, gallant Colonel down to old Murphy, his "bunkie,"* who thought his thirty years' service entitled him to growl at everything and everybody.

Sergeant Allan had given his testimony in such a simple, straightforward manner, as to favorably impress every member of the court, from gruff old Major Hartman, the president, to little Mr. Willis, the junior member, still so recent a graduate from West Point as not to have lost his "Cadet" waist. Still, there was no getting over certain ugly *facts*. Sergeant Allan had been found drunk or asleep on

* Soldiers' slang for "chum."

duty, and, owing to this breach of trust, convict Low had made his escape by sawing in two the iron bars of his cell window.

All the circumstances of the case had called for a peculiar vigilance on the part of the non-commissioned officers in charge of the guard during the month of July ; and Sergeant Allan seemed to have signally failed in the faithful performance of his duty.

During July the entire command at Fort Warren had been ordered in the field for their annual summer practice march and encampment, leaving behind one officer to command the garrison and just enough men to perform the necessary guard and police duties. The guard, during the absence of the troops, consisted of one non-commissioned officer and three privates, who relieved each other at stated intervals, it being required of each man while on duty to patrol or inspect the entire Post, which, if the sentry did in a proper manner, would occupy him fully three-quarters of an hour. The sergeant or corporal on duty for the day was ordered not to leave the Guard House on any pretext, and, during the absence of the one sentry on his tour of inspection, to keep an extra lookout for the prisoners. All this had been thoroughly explained during the trial.

Sergeant Allan, being sworn, testified in his own behalf as follows: He had performed his duties as Sergeant of the Guard according to the orders he had received from the Officer of the Day, Lieutenant Morris. There had been nothing suspicious in the manner of the prisoner Low. He had himself searched the prisoner's cell and person and had found nothing; he had given him his dinner at the usual hour, twelve o'clock, but Low had been sulky and refused to eat or even drink his coffee.

"Was your dinner sent at the same time and in the same dishes, Sergeant Allan?" asked Mr. Darrow, with quiet significance.

"Yes, sir," replied Allan, pausing a moment to see whether the young officer wished to interrogate him further; but Mr. Darrow, with a wave of the hand, motioned for him to go on.

"Private Jones, of H Company, came on guard at half-past twelve, relieving Private Barnes, of G Company."

"Had Private Jones access to the convict Low?" Mr. Darrow asked again, with great significance.

"Yes, sir," answered Allan, a shade more hopefully, for he began to gather from the young officer's

manner that there might be some hope for him. He had noticed that Mr. Darrow had returned from lunch looking quite excited over something ; but, as that officer had said nothing to his client, the poor boy had not thought to connect Mr. Darrow's sudden change of manner (he had been as gloomy as an owl all morning) with his case. " Private Jones removed the dinner dishes from the prisoner's cell."

" Did any conversation take place between Private Jones and the prisoner ? "

" No, sir," answered the Sergeant.

" Did *you* have any conversation with Jones ? "

" Yes, sir ; I gave him his orders, and made him repeat them to make sure he understood them. Then he asked me why the prisoner had not eaten his dinner, and, on my reply that I did not know, Jones said he supposed Low was sulking, and that he was a sulky brute anyway. Then he asked me if I had finished my dinner. I said yes, when he asked me if I did not want to drink the rest of my coffee. I said no, that it had a peculiar bitter taste. Jones agreed with me ; said he had noticed it himself, that the cook in the Company was no good, always burning something. He put the dishes on the

porch, then went off to patrol the Reservation," continued Allan.

"What did you do then, Sergeant?" asked his counsel.

"I took a look at the prisoner, sir, who seemed to be asleep, lying on his bunk ; then I sat down in the Guard-room to look over my tactics. In a few moments I began to feel sick and dizzy ; a sort of a blur came over my eyes ; I felt as if I were suffocating. I staggered to the Guard-house porch and fell there, and from that time I remember nothing until I felt the Officer of the Day shaking me and heard them say that Jones had deserted and Low escaped."

This finished the Sergeant's statement.

The Judge-Advocate then asked the prisoner why he had not called upon the other members of the Guard when he felt himself becoming ill.

"They had not returned from dinner," the Sergeant replied.

"Had you any intoxicating liquor on the day of July 20th?" asked the Judge-Advocate of the prisoner.

"No, sir," answered Allan, quietly.

"Are you addicted to the use of liquor in moderation?" sternly interrogated the Judge-Advocate.

"No, sir; I do not drink at all," replied Allan, coloring beneath his tanned cheeks.

The Judge-Advocate having finished his questions, Mr. Darrow then electrified the court and startled the prisoner by calling:

"Miss Dorothy Gladys Dutton, for the defence."

After the first start of utter amazement, Philip's heart gave a great bound of relief and hope. But what on earth could little Dorothy have to do with his case? It was all a mystery; but, only to look at the child's confident, eager little face, gave the boy hope, and he even smiled in response to the bright look she sent him, which seemed to say:

"Never mind, dear Mister Phil; I have come to help you," for the young soldier and little Dorothy had been great "chums" ever since a home-sick recruit he had joined the 40th Foot; that is, as much "chums" as was possible between the ranking duty Sergeant of Company G and the Captain's little daughter.

Captain Dutton and Philip's mother had been school-mates and warm friends in the old New England town where both were born and bred, and so,

when Mrs. Allan found her boy determined to win a commission from the ranks, as he had found it impossible to get an appointment to West Point, she sent him to her old friend, Captain Dutton, who enlisted Philip in his own Company, where the boy received rapid promotion, due entirely to his merits as a soldier.

Having been duly sworn by the grave young Judge-Advocate, who seemed somewhat flustered over this radiant little six-year-old witness who had answered with a grave, sweet solemnity which gave quite a new meaning to the words usually rattled off so glibly and thoughtlessly, "I will tell the whole truth, so help me God," the clear little childish voice had softly repeated.

And then Dorothy, or Dolly, as everyone in the garrison called the little girl, was allowed to tell her story in her own way.

PART II.

It was *such* a hot morning, and Dolly felt tired and cross. Papa was not at home to give her a delightful swing in the hammock, nurse was busy indoors; there was no Guard mounting to look at,

no Band practice to listen to ; the big green parade was entirely deserted ; even the flag hung limp and dejected in the sultry air. Poor Dolly felt herself a very much abused little girl ; even her large family of dolls seemed to have entered into the general conspiracy to be as trying as possible ; at least, so it had seemed to Dolly, who had shut them all up in the dark nursery closet for repentance—all save black Dinah, a respectable “colored lady” who seemed rather the worse for wear ; to this friend and confidant Dolly was confiding all her woes.

“ I think, Dinah, that a garrison with all the soldiers away from it is the most stupidest place to live in ; don't you ? ’Ticularly when your mamma will not allow you to go to the picnic with the uver children, dest 'cause you has the teeniest, weeniest bit of a headache. Mothers gets very *spoiled* sum-times,” she finished, quaintly.

The Guard-house, a low, squat building, all on one floor, was directly opposite Captain Dutton's quarters, with the width of the parade ground intervening.

Just then Dolly saw a tall young soldier, with his immaculate white stripes gleaming in the bright sun, come out on the Guard-house porch.

"Oh, dear ! there's Mr. Phil on guard to-day. I fink it is dest horrid ; I wanted him to go a fishin' with me."

Then all of a sudden a delightful but naughty idea popped into Dolly's little yellow head. A little to the rear of the Guard-house, and off to the right, was a group of beautiful, big live oaks ; it was always cool and shady there, the grass was so cool and green ; the big fantastic roots formed the most fascinating doll houses, while best of all, at the foot of the biggest tree, bubbled a small spring, surrounded by the most delightful kind of mud, so useful for mud pies ; and then she could see Mr. Phil perhaps.

Dolly knew perfectly well that she was forbidden to go any further across the parade than in a line with the flag staff ; but, during the absence of the troops, mamma had allowed nurse to take the child to this charming play-ground several times, and it was on this pretext that Miss Dolly now meant to follow her own sweet will, unaccompanied by anyone, save faithful Dinah.

"Now, Dinah, *this* will be your house," and poor Miss Darke—Dinah Darke being her full name—

was left in sole possession of the shining, saucy-looking little brass cannon which fired the Reveille gun so early every morning. "And I will take *this* for mine," continued the little girl, scrambling over onto its fellow, whose daily duty was to fire the parting salute to the sun as he went down and call the men to "Retreat."

"Oh, dear me, Dinah Darke! my parlor is all stuffed up with sumfin'," and Dolly tried in vain to pull from out the mouth of the cannon a large bundle wrapped in heavy brown paper. "Well, Dinah, I dess we'll dest have to play that we're very short of 'quarters' and 'double up,'" remarked Dolly, who, even in her short army life, had so often seen this done—that is, two officers' families (they were mostly apt to be way down second lieutenants, however) have to live in one set of quarters—that she was quite content to *play* it.

Dolly played very contentedly for a long time; then the long grass looked cool and inviting; the soft prairie breeze made her feel very sleepy—even Dinah looked drowsy; so, tucking the little old colored lady under her arm, Dolly curled herself up for a doze.

She had slept quite a while, when the bugles, sounding dinner call, suddenly awakened her.

"Soupy, soupy soup, without a single bean ;
Porky, porky pork, without a strip of lean ;
Coffee, coffee, coffee, meanest ever seen,"

sang the bugles merrily ; but naughty Dolly never stirred, though she knew it was luncheon time and that poor nurse would be nearly distracted at not finding her little charge safe in the hammock, where she had been told to stay.

"I'll stay a *little* longer, Dinah Darke," said the child, half defiantly, as if poor, weak Miss Darke had dared to remonstrate with her young mistress.

So Dolly lay there for some little time, wondering if Mr. Phil wouldn't appear, so that she might ask him to take her fishing the next day. She lay half facing the rear windows of the Guard-house, where she could see all that went on. She saw the sentry, returning from his patrol, come down the dusty, glaring road in front of the men's barracks ; saw Jones deposit the empty dinner dishes on the porch, then walk off carelessly, indeed, for a man who meant to desert that very moment. Dolly had seen all this,

but it passed before her eyes unconsciously, for it was an every-day sight, with nothing in it to interest the child.

But presently there was something to interest and excite her. Suddenly she saw Sergeant Allan, *her* Mr. Phil, stagger out on the Guard-house porch with such a white, sick face; he stood for an instant leaning against the door, when, without any warning, he dropped like a log to the floor. Dolly, with a little cry of pity and sympathy, raised herself to run to his assistance, when something very extraordinary happened.

The great, heavy, thick iron bars in one of the cells suddenly fell out with a loud, dull thud, and through the aperture appeared a wild, haggard face. It was a terrible-looking face, and it frightened Dolly so that instinctively she crouched back, trying to hide behind the cannon.

After glancing around with a quick, furtive look, the man at the window managed, though with some difficulty, to squeeze through; then he made straight for Dolly's hiding-place. For one dreadful moment poor Dolly's heart stood still with fright; but she remembered that she was a soldier's daughter, and,

after all, she was a brave little thing, so, with curious, intent eyes, she watched the man's every movement. She knew that it was the convict Low, and that he was evidently trying to escape. So, when the man, discarding the uniform he had disgraced, proceeded to array himself in a rusty suit of old "Cits," the contents of the mysterious bundle that had stuffed up the mouth of the cannon, Dolly remarked, gravely :

"I'se runned away, too."

With a startled, furious oath, the man looked up to find himself confronted by a dainty-looking little maid, with a sweet, serious little face framed in a mass of tangled golden curls. For an instant he paused as if struck dumb and motionless by this radiant vision in pale blue gingham who looked at him with her big fearless eyes. A wave of angry passion seemed to sweep over the man ; with a muttered oath, he sprang forward and caught Dolly violently by the arm.

"To be caught *now*, and by *such* a kid, too!" he cried, fiercely. "If you give the alarm, or utter a cry, I shall kill you! I wouldn't hurt a hair of her head," he muttered to himself; "she must be near my Nell's age."

For an instant the man seemed to be hesitating ; then he nodded his head and said, speaking rapidly and glancing around to see if he was still undiscovered :

“ See here, little girl, you’re Captain Dutton’s little girl, ain’t you ? Well, I’m going to get out of this, an’ *nothin’* ain’t a goin’ to stop me ; but, if you swear not to tell what you seed just now till *the day of Sergeant Allan’s trial*, and will shut your eyes, so as not to see which way I’m goin’, why I won’t hurt you. Quick, now, swear. I know the Sergeant’s a great friend of yourn, and he shan’t come to no harm if I *get away* ; he’s allus treated me square and gentlemanly, and, if you’ll keep quiet now until you hear ‘ *fatigue* ’* blow, that’ll give me half an hour’s start. It’s a desperate chance, depending on the word of a child,” thought the convict ; “ but, unless I kill the young ’un, there ain’t any-thing else to do, and I ain’t bad enough for that yet.”

Dolly had done some very rapid thinking during those few seconds ; she believed implicitly that this man with the white, terrible face would kill her, as he said, unless she promised ; then, too, it would help Mr. Phil. Dolly was too much frightened

* The call to commence work again.

and confused to understand how, still she was willing to do anything for her friend ; so, looking up steadfastly into the man's fierce face, she said, slowly :

"I promise to do as you ask. You had better hurry and get away ; the sentry may come back and 'soover you."

"Not he," replied the man, with a queer little smile. "Now shut your eyes and *remember*."

* * * * *

Quite a number of people in the Post saw a strange, slouchy-looking citizen walk slowly down the parade and finally disappear through the gate used by the enlisted men, and that was the last ever seen of convict Low, ex-private of the U. S. Army, though they did *hear* from him once again.

Dolly, faithful to her promise to this dreadful man, sat with her little hands tight over her eyes. Her heart was thumping so loud and there was a great lump in her poor little throat, which threatened every moment to choke her, and it did seem as if "fatigue call" would *never* sound ; and all this time poor Mr. Phil was lying there on the porch very, very sick.

Hardly had the very first note of "fatigue" left the bugle's mouth, when the other two members of the Guard, returning in a most leisurely manner from dinner, were startled by the sudden appearance of a wildly excited little girl, hatless and bonnetless, waving frantically an old black doll, who came flying up the Company street, calling :

"Oh, come ! come quick, quick ! Mr. Phil is so sick !" she gasped, breathlessly. Then, waiting only long enough to see that the men went to his assistance, very much sobered, with this great secret weighing like lead upon her, Miss Dolly Dutton went quietly home to receive, with the utmost meekness, nurse's reproaches and mamma's punishment for her naughtiness.

The court had listened to every word of the child's statement with the most absorbing interest, and Philip's face had lost its look of white despair and was now glowing with hope. The Judge-Advocate had no questions to put to this strange little witness, so Dolly was dismissed midst a low murmur of admiration.

"I have one more witness for the defence," said Allan's counsel ; "a silent one, which has just

reached me in the noon mail." Producing a rather grimy-looking letter, addressed in a sprawling, illiterate hand, he read slowly :

"The little gal's story is true. Jones fixt the 'non-com.'* wid this. He ain't to blame; we put it in his coffee.

From

A FRIEND."

Inclosed in the letter was a powder paper marked "opium," half emptied. Allan was cleared. Low had kept his promise; there had been some "honor among thieves."

The letter was post-marked Fort Warren, so that Low must have had a confederate besides Jones in the Post; but there was absolutely nothing by which to identify the writer.

The machinery of the law is proverbially slow, and military law particularly so. A great deal of "red tape" had to be gone through before the proceeding of Sergeant Allan's court was promulgated; but that did not matter to Philip's friends; they did not wait to have his innocence made known officially. They crowded round him, shaking him warmly by

*Soldiers' slang for non-commissioned officer.

the hand ; officers as well as men stepped up to congratulate the boy ; but one and all made way for



Dolly, who threw her little arms round the young soldier's neck and kissed him warmly.

Philip's eyes were wet with sudden tears as he held his faithful little friend close to his heart ; his

voice broke with long pent-up emotion, and he whispered, as he stroked fondly the little golden head nestled on his shoulder :

"Dolly, darling, what a brave, brave little girl you've been! I cannot thank you, dear; but, Dolly, you have more than saved my life—you have saved my honor."

A few days after the conclusion of the Court-Martial, a telegram was received from Department Headquarters ordering that Sergeant Allan be released from arrest and restored to duty. Shortly after this the proceedings were promulgated and Philip's complete innocence officially announced.

A few months after this trying and well-nigh fatal experience, Philip was ordered to appear before the Board of Officers, who were to examine the candidates for a commission. He passed through this ordeal with flying colors, thanks to his own hard study and Captain Dutton's faithful "coaching;" and, at the second and final examination, which occurred six months later, Sergeant Allan carried off the honors and quite distanced his competitors.

To Philip's great satisfaction and Dolly's intense delight, he was commissioned in the 40th Infantry,

where he received a cordial and hearty welcome from the officers under whom he had served as a sergeant.

One of the very first things Second Lieutenant Philip Allan did on drawing his first month's pay as officer of the army (and a very magnificent sum it seemed to him, too) was to repair to Tiffany's, where he ordered a very pretty and unique little locket, made after a design of his own—on one side a small gold and white enameled second lieutenant's shoulder strap, on the other the three white stripes of a sergeant's chevron; on the inside Philip's handsome face and honest, smiling eyes looked out, while below was inscribed these words :

"To brave, faithful little Dolly, from her ever grateful
friend,

PHILIP ALLAN.

TIMOTHY'S FIRST COMMUNION SUIT.

TIMOTHY'S FIRST COMMUNION SUIT.

FORT SISSETON was a big frontier Army Post on the banks of the "big Muddy," as the Indians call the Missouri River, way off in South Dakota, sixty miles from the nearest town and railway. And here Timothy Finnegan had been born and lived the whole twelve years of his young life. He had never seen a railroad, street cars, nor the big shops and residences of even a moderate-sized country town.

Occasionally a small steamboat, "a freighter," came puffing up the river, finding it hard work to run against the swift current, and almost impossible to avoid the numerous sand-bars that would actually form over night. Timothy was always the first one in the garrison to hear the whistle of the "Rosebush," and he would fly around like a wild creature, telling everybody he met that "the boat was a

comin'." He knew the probable dates of her arrival, and spent hours down by the primitive landing for the pleasure of seeing her first.

Timothy's father had been one of the oldest sergeants in the 30th Infantry; so, when the old soldier had died two years ago, leaving a wife and five little ones, the Colonel of the Regiment kindly gave Mrs. Finnegan permission to occupy the little tumble-down house where Tim and all the other children had been born, and the Post surgeon, a kindly old bachelor, who *said* he abhorred children, gave Mrs. Finnegan the job of Hospital Matron; in other words, she was laundress for the hospital.

Of course, they were very poor; but Tim had never minded his patched clothes and bare feet until he went to Father Wynne's First Communion class. The good priest drove fifty miles from his Mission once a month to say Mass at the Fort, for there were quite a number of Catholics amongst the officers and men. The Father had found ten children, four boys and six girls, old enough to prepare for what is for every Catholic "the happiest day in his life."

The first Sunday Tim went, he sat next Colonel Harrington's dainty little daughter, but she did not

seem to mind one bit; she moved her skirts to make room for him, and found the right page in the catechism. But when Tim went home after Sunday-school, he sat thinking quietly for a long time, then suddenly remarked :

"Mother, I've *got* to earn me a pair of shoes and a new suit of clothes for my First Communion ; besides, Father Wynne wants me to learn to serve Mass."

"Oh, Tim, dear ! it's a proud woman I'd be to see you on the altar ; but, however will we get the money ?"

"I've been prayin' to our Blessed Lady all this time, for I am 'Mary's child,' you're always tellin' me, and *she's* put the idea in my head to ask Dr. Warren for work. You know, he's had a civilian taking care of his horses ; but he got drunk and the doctor fired him. I'm going to ask for the job as soon as 'Retreat' sounds, for he'll be through with his dinner then."

"Oh, Tim ! you're too little, I'm feared," replied his mother.

"Not a bit, mothereen. I'm a bit small, p'raps, but," proudly, "Jones says there ain't a better hand with horses round here than me."

Jones was the sergeant in charge of the stables.

Dr. Warren was enjoying his cup of black coffee, in conjunction with a fragrant after-dinner cigar, when the old colored cook, who had followed his fortunes ever since the doctor had been in the army, came in and announced that "one o' de widah Finnegan byes wanted to see the doctor."

"Bring him in, Lucinda ; his mother has probably sent to complain of the size of the hospital washing. Well, my boy, what is it?" called the doctor, as Tim stood respectfully at the open door. "Come in, come in."

"Please, sir, I hurd you wanted a hired man."

"So I do ; a *man*, not a beast." The doctor was very hard on intemperance. "Were you thinking of applying for the job?" said the doctor, jokingly.

"Yes, sir." Then Tim began eagerly to explain ; but he hurried so in his excitement, that all Dr. Warren could make out was something about Sergeant Jones, a new suit of clothes, First Communion ; and he did not exactly understand which this last meant, so he had Tim sit down and go over the whole thing again.

The result was that a few days later Tim found himself engaged as assistant to the soldier who was

to take the principal care of the doctor's fine thoroughbreds. His salary was to be three dollars a month, and there were two full months before the class were to make their First Communion,

* * * * *

Tim had his six bright silver dollars, carefully tied up in an old pocket handkerchief, stowed away safely in a fine hiding-place—the grain bin, in the doctor's stable.

It was Wednesday, and on Sunday next the happiest event in his life was to take place, and, thanks to his Mother in heaven, he would be able to appear at the Sacred Banquet properly attired. Thursday his mother was going to send into Springfield, the nearest town, by the stage driver, for new shoes, hat and suit of dark blue clothes, and for sufficient white satin ribbon for a band around his coat sleeve and a big rosette.

"I would not like to receive our Blessed Lord looking like a little beggar. I want to have on my 'wedding garment' when Jesus comes to me," thought little Tim, reverently. Father Wynne had preached from this very text on his last visit, and the sermon had greatly impressed the child.

Imagine Tim's horror and dismay when, on putting his hand down in the accustomed place, he found his treasure *gone*. For a moment he was stunned; then his heart-broken cry brought old Dennis, the stable boss, Tim called him, on the scene. Tim had soon poured forth his trouble into the old man's sympathetic ear. Dennis turned the oats out of the box and searched and searched for the missing money, but nowhere could it be found. Dennis would have carried the story straight to the doctor, but Tim would not hear of it.

"He'll think I am begging. He's done enough for us already," he said. "Father Wynne says when Jesus sends us a cross, we must bear it willingly, like brave soldiers. I'll make my Communion on Sunday, but I'll just go to early Mass, so as not to spoil the procession for the rest. Our Lord will understand, Dennis."

Tim tried to speak cheerfully, but his voice would break a little as he thought of his vanished hopes and of how distressed his poor mother would be.

"Shure the bye talks loike the blissed saints. I'm feared he ain't long for this world," murmured Dennis, as he brushed a drop or two from his eyes.

"It's so long since pay day, I doubt could I beg, borrow or stale five dollars in the whole Post. Tim that hasn't spint their money, has lint it to them that has; but it'll go hard if that old hathen, Joe Dennis, don't get that bye his clothes."

But Dennis did not impart his thoughts to Tim, so at noon the little fellow started home, quite heart-broken, to tell the sad news to his mother.

"There's one thing I'll have just as fine as the others," thought Tim, "and that's my Rosary," for Father Wynne had given each of his children a lovely pure white Rosary. The beads were large imitation ivory ones; the Crucifix, though, was of solid silver, and on the back of it was inscribed the name of the happy Communicant and the date of the great event. The beads had been blessed with special indulgences, and these the priest had carefully explained to the children. Tim had never before received a present of any real value, so that this Rosary was doubly valuable in his eyes, for both its spiritual and material merits.

Most fervently had he said his prayers to the "Queen of the Rosary," and the thought came to him now that, if he could only take his beautiful

beads down on the river bank, under the shade of the curious-gnarled, big live oaks, and tell his heavenly Mother all about his trouble, he felt sure she would sympathize and help him to bear it bravely, as the son of a soldier should. It was of no use trying to pray at home, with four noisy children playing about; he would not even tell his poor mother of his loss until he had talked it over with his "Blessed Lady." His mother saw him, however, as he stole quietly into the house for his beads and started off down the path to the river.

"Shure Tim is just a wee bit of a saint, I'm thinking. What would me and the children do widout him, now that his father, God rest his soul, has been taken? Tim would be a priest, I'm sure, if only I could earn the money for his eddication." The poor, tired woman sighed as she spoke, then, after a moment, added: "God's will be done."

In the meantime, Tim had settled himself at the foot of a great oak, so gray and venerable that it looked as if it might have stood there from the time of the flood. He had not knelt down, but had thrown himself on his face, so that his thoughts might not be distracted by the fascinating sights

and sounds around him, for this poor, ignorant little boy was an ardent lover and student of nature, though, perhaps, he would not have understood the meaning of these terms at all.

The second Joyful Mystery was just ended; already Tim felt greatly comforted, when the sound of laughter and merry voices struck his ear. Presently he saw Marjorie Harrington, with her nurse and the little Lloyd girls, emerge from the path. They carried long fishing-poles and a big tin bucket, evidently expecting to make a big catch. They did not see Tim, who remained quiet; they went directly down the seldom-used boat-landing, and soon all was silent again and Tim went on with his beads.

He had just finished the last decade, when a piercing scream rent the air, followed in quick succession by cries for help. Rushing in the direction of the cries, Tim saw Nora, Colonel Harrington's nurse, screaming and frantically waving her arms, while the Lloyd children followed her example. He reached the river bank just in time to see Marjorie's white face and dripping golden curls appear on the surface of the water, while the swift current whirled her rapidly around.

In an instant Tim was in the water, striking out, with bold, swift strokes, for the spot where he had seen the child disappear. The current would carry him along as swiftly as it would her, so that when she rose again he would be near enough to seize her. Certainly his heavenly Mother aided his feeble arms, for in an instant Tim had the drowning child safely in a firm grasp. She struggled violently, however, and clutched him with both little hands, so that it was all he could do to keep afloat.

Nora had disappeared, and Tim knew she had run for help, so he gave up making any effort to swim. His arms felt as if they were breaking; his head was on fire; everything seemed turning dark, and yet he did not let go of Marjorie.

Then came a dreadful moment, when he felt they were sinking; as if in a dream, he heard shouts: "Hold out! we're coming. Just a moment!" cried the voice, mockingly. A moment? No, not a second, for, with the shouts in his ears, Tim felt the cool, dark waters rush over them.

* * * * *

Tim knew nothing more until he awakened to find himself in a pretty, cool room, with dainty

white curtains blowing to and fro, and on the wall, right where his eyes rested, was a beautiful photograph of the Holy Mother and the Divine Child. The Mother's eyes looked at little Tim tenderly, and the Child held out His arms as if to embrace him.

Mrs. Finnegan, in her best black gown, sat looking anxiously at her son.

"Is Marjorie safe, mother?" he murmured, drowsily.

"Yes, dear, thanks be to God, Who gave you the strength to hold on to her."

"Are my beads safe?" was his next question.

"They were in your pocket, dearie, and only got a bit wet."

"I'm glad, for they're all I'll have for my Holy Communion. I've lost all my money, mother; some mean thief has stole it."

"There, there, dearie; be quiet now. Dennis has told us all about it," replied his mother, soothingly, for the little pale cheeks flushed with excitement, and Tim's eyes looked bright and feverish.

"Here, Mrs. Finnegan; Dr. Warren wishes Tim to take this," said Mrs. Harrington, who had just come in. "Marjorie has had her dose. Dear, brave

little Tim!" she cried, her voice breaking; and, as the tall, stately lady stooped and kissed the little lad, Tim wondered to feel his face wet. What was she crying for? he wondered.

It was Saturday before the two invalids had quite recovered from the nervous shock of the accident. Colonel and Mrs. Harrington have insisted upon keeping Tim. Everyone in the garrison came to have a peep at the small hero; they brought him delicacies of all kinds, offered to sit up with him, read to him and altogether quite overwhelmed the modest lad, who could not be made to understand that he had done anything heroic. Father Wynne had arrived Friday, and the First Communion class had gone into retreat, so that Tim simply would not allow the subject of clothes to distract him.

After confession Saturday evening, Tim waited to walk back with Father Wynne. He then told the priest all about his loss, and of how he would receive at the first Mass, for, of course, when he had not even a decent pair of shoes, he could not march in the procession with the others. Father Wynne smiled, but said nothing. Tim was to go home, but, as he passed the Colonel's quarters, Mrs.

Harrington and Marjorie were waiting for him on the porch.

"Come in, Tim!" cried Marjorie, smiling happily.

A big square box was spread out on the drawing-room table, and the Colonel himself was busy opening it. Tim turned quite white when he saw what came out of that wonderful box. First a beautiful dark blue suit and pretty hat to match; then new shoes and stockings, white shirts, ties, handkerchiefs, gloves and a lot of broad white satin ribbon; in fact, everything that Tim could have possibly wished for.

But when Mrs. Harrington put into his hands an exquisite white Russia calf missal, bound in solid silver, Tim's feelings quite overpowered him, and he burst into tears, sobbing out his thanks as best he could.

* * * * *

The next morning Tim was up bright and early to give the finishing touches to the pretty chapel. As he opened the door, he found a dirty white envelope addressed to "Tim Finnegan." On opening it, he found six very dirty dollar bills folded in a piece of paper, on which was scrawled :

"I done you a mean trick. I am sorry I done it, so here's the munny back."

That was all, and Tim never did find out who it was that had stolen his hard-earned store. Father



Wynne, however, had suggested this mode of restitution, for the guilty man had confessed his sin to the priest.

The entire garrison turned out, Protestants as well as Catholics, to see these ten happy children receive for the first time Our Lord in the Most Holy Eucharist. It was a beautiful and most touching sight, and many of those present never forgot the glorified look on little Tim's face. He looked as if he had had a foretaste of heaven, as surely he had.

After Vespers, Father Wynne told him that all had been arranged for him to come and live with the priest, where he might study and obtain the education necessary for a priest. Colonel and Mrs. Harrington were to look after the mother and the little ones as an act of thanksgiving to Almighty God for His mercy in sparing their only child, who was saved through Tim's simple bravery.

* * * * *

A tall young seminarian, at "Woodstock" to-day, who is beloved and looked up to for his sweet humility and fervent love for the "Queen of the Rosary" and her Divine Son, shows that the generosity of his benefactors, Colonel and Mrs. Harrington, has not been wasted nor thrown away.

SPOT'S THANKSGIVING DINNER.

SPOT'S THANKSGIVING DINNER.

“**T**HE Commanding Officer’s compliments, sir, and the Inspector will be ready to go over the ordnance stores at half-past one, if that will be convenient to the Captain.”

“Very good, Orderly,” replied Captain Miller. “Say to the Colonel that I will meet Major Powel at the Adjutant’s office; and, Orderly, just stop in at my Company and tell Sergeant Murray to report with the keys at the store-house a little before half-past one.”

“Yes, sir,” answers the smart young soldier, saluting with military stiffness, even though his white-gloved fingers are half frozen, and the icy wind, which has full sweep over the snow-covered parade ground, blows his cape wildly over his ears.

And so poor little Spot’s fate is sealed, though happily he is quite unconscious of it, as he stands on three legs at a time, trying to give the fourth member a chance to warm up a bit, wagging his

stump of a tail in a vain endeavor to attract the attention of his "big" master. He sees "little" master waving to them from the parlor window, and feels sure that he is telling them to hurry in out of the cold.

"Well, Jack, how goes it?" Captain Miller asks of his little son, when presently they are all comfortably established in front of the glowing open fire, both small boy and small dog stretched out at full length on the bearskin rug that lies before the hearth.

This is the regular formula between these two, no matter how short a time they have been separated, for the tenderest and most devoted friendship exists between the big, jolly, hearty father and the frail, quaint little son. There is always so much to tell in reply to his papa's question, that Jack says they are always "interruckted" before he has half finished.

"Oh, we've had dest a¹ nice time this morning, papa!" Jack answered, eagerly. "Polly and I knew our lessons so 'estremely well' (unconsciously quoting mamma) that we got frew at ten o'clock ezsactly, and we's been playing snow forts and fightin' ever since. I'se huntin' my appertite, too," he adds, quaintly. "I heard mamma tell you yesterday that I'd lost it."

"Well, have you succeeded?" replies his father.

"Yes, I fink so," the child rejoins, seriously. "I feel quite empty, and I do wish that luncheon bell would hurry up and ring. Polly avises me to wear a belt and eat up to it; then we'll know when we've had enough. She means to do it herself."

The Captain's hearty laugh echoes throughout the house, and brings Mrs. Miller and Polly downstairs to share in the fun.

"What is the joke, boys?" cries Mrs. Miller, gayly, appealing to her "big" boy, as she calls the Captain.

"Polly will have to explain," chuckled the big boy, while Jack, with rather an injured air, demands of his sister, a little roly-boly dumpling of a girl, a year and a half older than her brother :

"Polly, didn't you advise me to get a belt and eat up to it?"

"Bless the child ! what does he mean?" laughed mamma.

But Polly answers, stoutly : "Yes, Jack, I did, and I think it is a most—a most excellent idea, too, says Miss Longwords. You know old Yellow Hawk's squaw, who comes to Nora to get some

breakfast most every day? *She* wears a belt; and when she is hungry, she pulls it in, tighter and tighter; but when she has plenty to eat, why she lets her belt away out, and just eats and eats till it gets tight again; then she stops, 'cause she knows then that she has had enough. You see, mamma, that's the way with Jack and me. I have such an *enormous* appetite, that when my belt commenced to get tight, I should know that I had had enough, while Jack, who has such a tiny, wee bit of an appetite, and, as Dr. Wilson says, does not eat half enough, could do the same."

Here Polly paused quite breathless, but triumphant, in her long explanation.

"You are quite right as to your facts, little woman. It is an old Indian custom; and I have known soldiers, on a long march, when rations were scarce and meals few and far between, to try your plan with great success."

Captain Miller smiled at the earnest faces of the two children, who have taken the whole discussion in dead seriousness, and he gravely added: "I think mamma cannot do better than fall in with your idea, Pollykins. We will send over to the Post trader's

at once for two belts, one to enable *you* to restrain your appetite, and the other to help Jack to increase his. You know, 'it is a poor rule that won't work both ways.'"

"There is the luncheon bell now," announced mamma, still smiling over Polly's funny idea.

"Come, Jack," called the Captain; "come and show us what kind of an appetite you found this morning."

At the first move towards the dining-room, Spot jumped on his feet, for he knows quite as well as any other member of the family what the bell is for.

"Come, Spotty, I'll 'scort you to the luncheon!" cried Jack, merrily; and, seizing him by the front paws, dances wildly off down the hall.

* * * * *

Spot is quite a wonderful little dog, so smart, so full of real intelligence, and withal so very good-natured, that not a soul in the whole garrison, from the Colonel down to the crusty Provost-Sergeant, who is the declared enemy of all dogs, but is his friend. His mother had been a lady of high degree, a full-blooded fox terrier, with a pedigree almost as long as the young English ranchman who owned her.

Spot showed his aristocratic ancestry in his beautifully marked head and body and pointed nose ; but, alas ! his ears and tail quite gave him away, showing only too plainly a trace of plebeian blood.

Jack had heard so much about "thoroughbreds" and "curs" from the different young officers of the Post, who sometimes discussed rather vehemently the relative merits of their canine pets, that it was no wonder the child should become slightly confused on the subject ; so that one day, in answer to Lieutenant Johnson's request for Spot's pedigree, he replied, with great complacency :

"He is a thoroughbred *cur*, sir."

He was puzzled and hurt at the shout of laughter that greeted his innocent remark. Jack resented their merriment deeply—he hated being laughed at —by marching off in a very dignified and stiff manner, quite forgetting to touch his cap to Lieutenant Johnson or the group of young officers standing on the Line in front of the "Bachelor's Mess."

* * * * *

"My dear," Captain Miller says to his wife as they are finishing luncheon, "I think you had better keep the 'chicks' in this afternoon ; it is blowing

up a blizzard, and the thermometer was pretty near zero when I came in. I wish I could stay at home, but the Colonel sent me word that Major Powel would be ready to inspect the ordnance stores at half-past one. There is a lot of useless truck I want to get condemned; but we shall hurry as much as possible, and try and get home before the storm breaks."

"Do!" replied Mrs. Miller, with a slight shiver; "I hear the wind rising already. I am going to help Nora with the mince-meat this afternoon; we must be getting ready for Thanksgiving. Polly, you and Jack may help stone raisins."

"Oh, that will be lots of fun, mamma!" cry both children; but papa laughs, and cautions them not to pick out all the big ones to eat.

"Now, Spot," says Captain Miller, as he buckles on his sword and gets into his big army overcoat, "take my advice and stay at home, too," for the small dog stands ready and eager, waiting to accompany his master.

It was well known that, to find Captain Miller, all that was necessary was to hunt up Spot, who was always to be found, like "Mary's lamb," "lingering near." The orderlies knew this so well, that if the

Captain was not to be found in his quarters, they simply looked around for a small white and black dog. If Spot was to be seen on the porch of the Adjutant's office or the Officers' Club, you might feel sure his master was within. Even when Captain Miller was Officer of the Day, and visited his Guard, going the rounds of the long chain of sentries, the faithful, affectionate little fellow was always on hand.

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The small dog's ears and tail drooped at once on hearing the words "stay at home;" but, though he looked so submissive and gave a dejected little whine of protest, no sooner did the Captain open the door than, like a flash, Spot was out, wiggling his whole body in the most deprecatory manner.

His master laughed and then said, good-naturedly: "Well, come on then, you foolish little dog," but he was really touched and pleased that the faithful little creature should prefer a long, cold tramp with him to a game of romps with the children.

The early twilight of our northern winter had come, bringing with it a rising wind—a bitter, icy wind, thick with fine, hard snow-flakes that sting like needles and blur with a freezing veil the imme-

diate surroundings; then, they fall thicker and thicker, making it impossible to even see across the parade, and what Westerners call a genuine "Dakota blizzard," good for three days, has settled down on Fort Winston.

"Retreat" sounds at half after four; the Buglers, in their big buffalo overcoats, blow the call from the Guard-house porch. The First Sergeants of the different Companies call the rolls inside their barracks, and do not even attempt to cross the parade to report to the Officer of the Day, this officer himself not having turned out. Even the evening gun is not fired; and the bit of a storm flag, with most of its stars and stripes blown away, is left out to flap the remaining glories in the shrieking wind all night.

This immediate and entire suspension of all military duties during a "blizzard," is made necessary at Fort Winston by some terrible experiences in the past. Only a few years before, the bugler on guard, a young lad of sixteen, in attempting to sound "Tattoo," had wandered away in the storm and darkness, and was found late the next day frozen stiff, with his bugle in his hand, not fifty feet from his own Company's barracks.

When Captain Miller returned to the house from his tour of inspection, both children rushed to help him brush off the snow which covered his boots and froze his sword to his overcoat. His big blonde moustache had been converted into two funny little icicles, which made the children laugh.

"Why, where is Spot, papa? What have you done with him?" suddenly cried Jack.

"Isn't he here?" said the Captain, looking surprised. "It was so cold, and he looked so thoroughly miserable, hopping around on three legs, that I sent him home just as we left the Adjutant's office."

"He didn't come home, papa," says Polly, "for Jack and I have been downstairs all afternoon helping mamma, you know, with the mince-meat, and we should have heard him scratch to get in."

"Strange," replied their papa, "for Spot certainly started in the direction for home. Perhaps he may have taken refuge in the Guard-house again, Jack," he suggested, rather mischievously.

"Oh, I *don't* think so, papa! I whipped him well the last time he did that, an' I talked to him most seriously. I told him he was dest a disgrace to us, an' if he did it again, I would give him away!"

cried Jack, eagerly, defending his pet from the opprobrium attached to the name of "Guard-house dog" in military circles, a vague enough term of reproach to the civilian outsider, but one fraught with dire significance by the initiated, as being synonymous with "loafer, utterly worthless, outcast," etc.

The "Guard-house dog" is one who prefers the company of the military offenders of the garrison to more respectable companions; he is content to walk behind the "garbage cart" for the privilege of carrying off the old musty, cast-away bones. With a general air of abjectness and a meek, apologetic mien, this unfortunate canine pariah follows the prisoners in their daily duty of cleaning up the Post—"policing," as it is known in army parlance. Kicked and cuffed, his lot is anything but a happy one.

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Now Jack's pet has one sad failing, due, perhaps, to his faint trace of plebeian blood, which the boy's fastidious nature finds hard to excuse and forgive. Once in a great while Spot deliberately plays truant, to indulge his low tastes with a roll in some unpleasant carrion that he has happened upon in his wanderings. The dog seems to be thoroughly ashamed of

this depraved taste; repentance always follows upon indulgence; but, knowing the severe views that his young master holds upon this one bad habit of his, he is too smart to go home, but betakes himself to the Guard-house and gets what solace he can from the attentions of its inmates, who are thoroughly well aware of the situation of affairs and, in their work about the Post, lose no opportunity of drawing Jack's notice to his disgraced favorite.

But Jack is very obdurate; Spot must make the first overtures. Finally, after two or three days of these strained relations, this mutual avoidance, Spot will come sneaking in at the kitchen door, and presently Nora, the cook, will find Jack and say:

"Spot is back, Jack dear."

"Oh, is he, Nora?" says the young man, with a fine air of indifference; then, taking down a small riding whip he keeps for this very purpose, the repentant sinner is escorted to the back yard for punishment. Soon piercing howls are heard, interspersed with bits of good advice, delivered in Jack's most grown-up manner.

Thus the little unpleasantness is made up, and no one ever alludes to it in the child's presence, for

Spot's occasional lapses from ordinary good canine breeding are a source of genuine distress and mortification to his young master.

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As day after day passes and nothing is seen or heard of poor Spot, Jack becomes alarmed and grieved, and finally quite inconsolable at the loss of his pet. Everyone in the garrison is interested in learning his fate, and everyone has some theory as to the cause of the dog's sudden and mysterious disappearance.

Lieutenant Morrow, who is in command of the Company of Indian soldiers stationed at Fort Winston, nearly breaks Jack's heart one day, when Spot has been missing fully a week, by suggesting that perhaps the Indians have made him into "dog soup or stew," a favorite native delicacy. During the recent cold snap they had been pretty hard up for rations, as that young officer well knew. But Polly refused to believe it possible, and, being nothing if not practical, she went at once to Lieutenant Davis, her staunch friend and ally amongst the young officers, and, as he happened to be Officer of the Day,

insisted upon his inspecting the Indian teepees, where the squaw wives of the Indian soldiers lived.

Entering heartily into the children's sorrow, Mr. Davis made a thorough inspection of the whole Indian camp, and in Mrs. Yellow Lightning's teepee he found the unmistakable remains of a small dog. He sternly questions the dusky mistress of the mansion, who protests vehemently, in broken English and fluent Sioux, that what Lieutenant sees is one of her own particular pets (?). Not content with this explanation, Mr. Davis sends for "Corporal" Yellow Lightning himself, who at once settled the matter, and proves that the dog was indeed *not* Spot by producing the hide of the sacrificed animal, which belonged evidently to the genus known familiarly as "yaller dog."

So the mystery of Spot's disappearance remains unsolved, though Captain Miller thinks the poor little fellow must have been frozen to death the night of the blizzard. When finally two whole weeks have gone by, Polly and Jack have given up their pet forever.

Thanksgiving Day dawned bright and sunny, and officers and men at Fort Winston were quite ready to celebrate the Nation's holiday. Though they were

fifty miles from the railroad, every Company in the Post had an elaborate menu for the day, including, of course, turkey and mince pie, *one pie* to each man being the allowance.

Jack had accompanied the Colonel, who, with his officers and ladies, always made the tour of the different Companies, to see and admire the decorations and good dinners. This was an old custom in the Fortieth Foot, and Jack had always before thoroughly enjoyed trotting behind his father, getting a taste of a nice cucumber pickle (a forbidden luxury at home) from "G" Company, a slice of mince pie from "H," a lump of fruit cake from "B," and so on, ending up with his papa's Company, where he always dined twice a year—Thanksgiving and Christmas—at the formal invitation of the whole Company. But this time the loss of his dear dog seemed to have taken the flavor out of everything. Naturally a rather delicate child, Jack had grieved himself half sick over the disappearance of his pet, and had quite lost the fine appetite he had hunted for so energetically.

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Polly, in her quaint, pale blue gown, with huge puffed sleeves, looked like a pretty old-fashioned

picture as she danced in and out of the kitchen, no sooner in than ordered out, for fear of soiling the new frock. Smelling ecstatically the big turkey browning in the oven and sniffing with delight the odor of the hot mince pies, dipping a sly little finger first in the mayonnaise, then into the cream, which stood ready for freezing, Polly tried her best to induce Jack to come and share in these delights, but in vain. Jack, in his new black velvet suit, with deep lace collar and cuffs, looked very fine, but felt miserable; he regarded Polly's excitement, the festive preparation, with a listless, indifferent air that tried Polly's good nature severely.

Captain and Mrs. Miller invited always all the bachelor officers in the Post to dine with them on Thanksgiving, for the Captain says he remembers how he felt when, as a "youngster," he was obliged to dine at the mess—perhaps all alone, too—on Thanksgiving Day.

Jack is lying in front of the parlor thinking of his lost pet, and thinking so hard that two big tears have welled up in his eyes, when suddenly he hears footsteps on the front porch; the bell rings, and then a low, faint whine strikes his ear. In an

instant he has thrown the front door wide open, and is clasping his beloved Spot in both arms. The faithful, affectionate little creature makes a feeble attempt to lick his master's hand, but is too weak to do more than moan piteously. Jack is half laughing and half crying with joy, but he exclaims, eagerly :

"Come in, Sergeant ! come in, and tell me where you found Spot !" Then, rushing through the house, he calls out : "Oh, mamma, papa, Polly, Polly—all come quick ! Spot is found !"

Soon the whole family, with many exclamations of pity and surprise over poor Spot's condition—for he is nothing but skin and bones—gathered around Sergeant Murray, waiting to hear how the dog was found.

"Shure the Captain will hardly believe it, when he hears that the poor baste has been shut up in the ordnance store-house since *two weeks* ago, when the Captain was there with the Inspector."

"Can it be possible, Murray !" exclaimed the Captain, deeply distressed at what the poor little dog must have suffered.

"How the pore baste has iver stood the cowl'd, let alone the hunger and thirst, bates me enthirely, sir."

"Poor little Spot! Good dog," says the Captain, petting the dog gently. "What have you done for him, Sergeant?"

"I took him to the Company, sir; he was that thirsty he drank a whole pail of water without stoppin', but he don't seem to want anything to ate, sir."

"All the better; we shall have to feed him slowly and cautiously," says the Captain. Then he added: "Spot must have followed us into the store-house, and, in our hurry, we must have shut the poor little fellow in. It seems almost incredible that any animal could have survived such a long fast. But, Sergeant, tell us, how did you discover him?"

"Well, sir," replies the Sergeant, smiling broadly, "for the past week the men on guard has bin sayin' they heered quare noises in the old store-house—moans and cries; as they said, 'twas *ghosts*, sir; and last night, the man on No. 3—Daly, of 'G' Company, sir—as he was walkin' past about two o'clock, called for the Sergeant of the Guard, declaring he'd heered *spirit* voices sayin', 'Oh, oh, oh!' as if in terrible pain."

"Why wasn't the ghostly disturbance reported to the Officer of the Day?" Captain Miller asked, severely, but with a twinkle of amusement in his eyes. But Polly and Jack stand breathless with excitement and eyes as big as saucers, waiting for the Sergeant to finish.

"If the Captain remembers, I was Sergeant of the Guard, an', not belavin' in ghosts; I thought I'd do a bit of investigatin' before I reported any sich nonsense. But what, wid gettin' ready the Thanksgivin' dinner, sir, and straightening things out after it was over, sir, I forgot all about the sperits till after Retreat. I went over to the store-house, but didn't hear a sound of any kind; but, as soon as I opened the door, I heered a moanin' and whinin', an' found the little dog lying near the door too weak to move. '*Here's the ghost,*' says I, and I took him to the Company first, as I told the Captain, then brought him here."

"We cannot thank you half enough, Sergeant Murray," Captain Miller replied, warmly; "but you have earned the sincere gratitude of the whole family. Your good sense has certainly saved Spot's life."

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Soon the dinner guests arrive, and when the wonderful tale of Spot's long fast is told to each one, the little dog is quite overwhelmed with praise and petting, as he reclines in state on Polly's very best doll's afghan.

When they all go out to dinner, Mr. Davis suggests that Spot be a guest, too, for he certainly deserves a *Thanksgiving* dinner. So the invalid is gently carried out to the dining-room, and Polly and Jack vie with each other in feeding him dainty morsels, which the poor dog has no appetite for.

"Gravy and chicken bones come to my plate;
Little *dogs* eat, while little boys wait,"

quotes Jack, reversing the usual order of things.

It was some weeks before Spot fully recovered his strength and sleek, well-fed appearance, but then that is not to be wondered at after two weeks' fast. Strange to say, although this happened a year ago, Spot has not once indulged in his former bad habit; his long fast and imprisonment seems to have worked a thorough reformation.
